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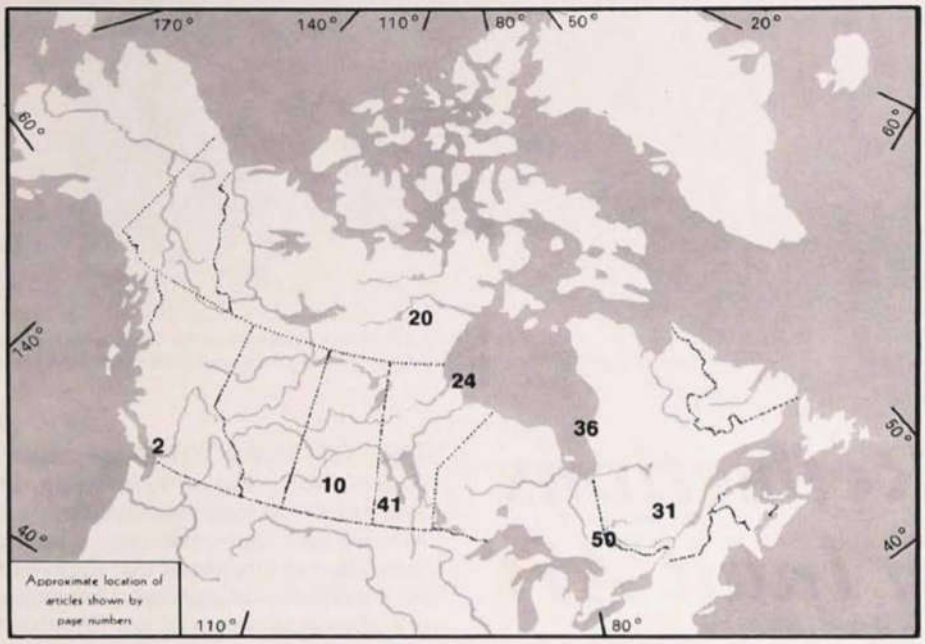

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COVER: 'On the Way to Baie St Paul'. Oil painting 12" x 16", by Robert Lougheed. Undated.

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Ernest Mayer

'Animal', undated, by Miki of Eskimo Point. The artist is one 'whose works are either thoroughly enjoyed or simply don't appeal — there is no middle ground.' Jerry Twomey Collection, Winnipeg Art Gallery.

Reflections On Inuit Art

BY BETTY BELL

For thirteen years Mrs Alistair Bell was buyer of Inuit Art for the Gallery Shop in the Vancouver Art Gallery.

THE GALLERY SHOP of the Vancouver Art Gallery first came into being in 1964 under the auspices of the women's auxiliary to the Vancouver Art Gallery and with the blessing of Richard Simmins, the director at that time. At first, there was no thought of attempting to become involved in the sale of original works of art. The first tentative steps taken by the committee on the way to eventually becoming recognized dealers in Inuit art was the placing, around 1965, of a trial order through the Hudson's Bay Company for about a dozen inexpensive carvings — a conspicuously hesitant beginning, but one which led to far greater involvement.

Shortly after that experiment, which had resulted in an immediate sell-out, George Swinton happened to drop into the shop and when asked about a regular source for carvings from the Arctic he immediately advised us of Canadian Arctic Producers, the wholesale outlet for the work from the arctic co-operatives in the Northwest Territories. That began a period of a year or so when Mary Craig or one of her assistants in Ottawa, selected occasional shipments of up to thirty or so small to medium-sized carvings for us, and I was lucky enough to be the one who looked after them. We almost went into shock the first time it was necessary to price a piece of sculpture at $100. We were still cautiously feeling our way.

As business increased, it was decided that two of us would follow up one of our buying trips to the Toronto Gift Show by visiting Ottawa ourselves to pick out a supply of carvings sufficient to last for several months or even a year. That, at least, was our expectation. It turned out to be rather a bewildering

Ernest Mayer

'Parka Image', 1964, by John Kavik of Rankin Inlet.
George Swinton Collection in the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

Ernest Mayer

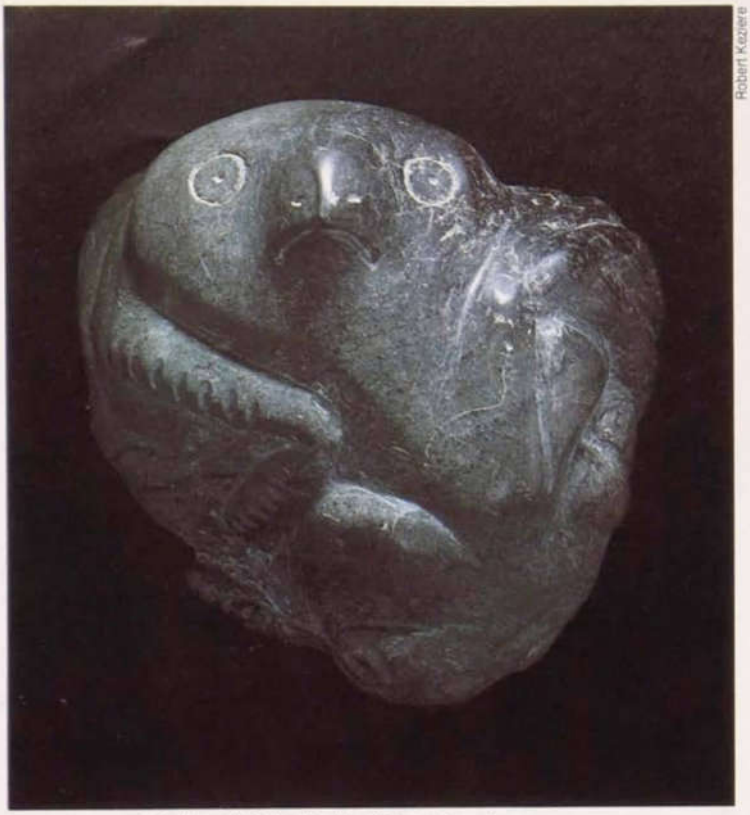
'Two Bird Figures', 1970, by Miki.
George Swinton Collection, Winnipeg Art Gallery.

day. Facing shelf after shelf packed with heavy stone figures, stumbling over large sculptures on the floor, and having the responsibility for the first time of personally choosing suitable pieces was an overwhelming experience. That first day there were many hesitations and qualms before the final selections were made. From then on, we found it necessary to renew our stock with increasing frequency and to choose a larger portion of important pieces as the shop grew into a respected dealership. Finally we achieved the near impossible by becoming, one year, the customer with the largest volume at Canadian Arctic Producers.

Once the move of the wholesale depot from Catherine Street to the present building near the Ottawa airport was made, the selection of suitable works became infinitely simpler; one could see and even walk around most of the carvings, and it was then that I established my own way of buying.

There were two main criteria: the Vancouver Art Gallery's standards must always be kept in mind, and nothing should be bought that I myself didn't really like (although there were naturally degrees of approval, ranging from considering a work pleasant and well made to being personally immensely excited by it). There was also the necessity of making sure that sufficient choice in size and price within these guidelines could be offered to suit a varied public. After all, not everyone who enters an art gallery shop wants or is able to leave with a major purchase, although I know some visitors surprised themselves and us by succumbing to an important work on impulse. But apart from aiming to attract casual buyers, it was also necessary to keep in mind our growing list of collectors and returning customers, many of whom were, not too much later than ourselves, developing their feeling and appreciation for outstanding carvings.

What caught my eye increasingly, the longer I was a buyer, was a carving with individuality and originality and also, and I suppose most particularly, with some of the marks of the tool. This is a preference not confined to Inuit works, but to sculpture in general. There are, of course, many exceptions — in Inuit carving, for instance, the intimate ivory pieces obviously appreciate in beauty with their finish — but I do feel a considerable portion of the recent stone sculpture is overly tidy and too highly polished for my taste. The simple and meaningful earlier pieces (usually fetishes or toys handled and re-handled until smooth and seductive to hold) are another exception to the preference for tool-marks. The availability of power-tools must make it very tempting to overdo the glossiness of a carving, and obviously this shiny finish has great appeal for many people and is most saleable. But ruggedness (frequently, it is recognized, caused by harder stone) is something I myself find much more exciting as a rule. Again, there are always exceptions



Robert Keziere

'Owl', c. 1960, by Pudlo of Cape Dorset.
From the collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery.

and some of the impressive works by the best-known artists are very desirable in spite of showing no tool marks and being painstakingly finished.

So, while I never blinded myself to the smoother work and certainly bought good pieces of various sorts, I was most attracted by and looking for the rougher and more powerful works, and those were what were picked out so quickly at Canadian Arctic Producers. It usually turned out, after our first couple of years as dealers, that the shop displays included many pieces from Baker Lake, Rankin Inlet, Eskimo Point, Spence Bay and Pangnirtung and a few from Lake Harbour or Belcher Islands, though it was recognized that most of the works so passed by were as well carved and as saleable as those that I myself happened to prefer.

Another preference was for works standing on their own feet. The effect of a pedestal being carved as part of a sculpture seems to inevitably detract from the piece, even though it obviously makes it more secure. Many of the ivories, of course, have to be set into stone or bone and this practically never affects the beauty of the work. How else, for instance, could a group of minute sea-birds be displayed? But for larger stone or whale-bone works those splayed-out stands, unfortunately becoming more numerous as time goes by, seem almost, without exception, interferences with the carvings themselves.

Whale-bone carvings always caught my eye and held attraction for the material, apart from the carving, because of the variations of colour and texture, so far fewer whale-bone than stone carvings were without any particular interest. I felt, perhaps without foundation, that the artists themselves often got more inspiration from working in the bone and this resulted in a higher percentage of really creative works in that material. There would certainly be a great challenge in using the contrasts between the denser and the more perforated areas in an imaginative way, and I feel sure that these variations, as well as the shape of the bones, frequently suggested the eventual forms. This also must have been a reason for so many intense 'spirit' pieces being carved from whale bone. One particularly compelling work of this nature, obviously influenced by the bone's shape, was created at Arctic Bay in 1964 by Kongaseretook, (also known as Elijah Kuppaq). It makes an unforgettable impression on one and refuses to be ignored. Luckily this unique piece, which actually has three sets of eyes, was not one that was taken away to some other country, but remains a treasured object in a private Vancouver collection. When on a buying trip whale bone was always high on my list because of its many attractions.

These were my guidelines, or perhaps some would consider them prejudices, when choosing carvings, but there was never complete rigidity because, it is stressed again, there are always exceptions and one would be extremely foolish to exclude a fine and attractive work because it did not comply with all one's personal criteria. But having such a definite sense of what I wanted did lead to much speedier selection.

Having decided on my objectives, I found out, somewhat to my surprise, that buying very fast and depending on first impressions gave me the best results. This sometimes shocked other people who thought it a careless or flippant approach; but I seldom regretted having worked in that way — moving quite quickly through the displays and picking out carvings to right and left as anything attracted my eye. Then I went back more slowly on my tracks to find any good pieces which had eluded me on the first round. I sometimes found it hard to believe that I would spend $6,000 in two or three hours. Once in a while I discovered later that, because of this method of selecting, some small carving refused to stand up, had lost a spear or possibly its antlers, or even had some minor defect on closer observation. But in almost all cases I continued to agree with my own first impressions.

Robert Keziere

'Spirit', 1964, whale bone and stone, by Kongaseretook (also known as Elijah Kuppaq) of Arctic Bay. From a private collection in North Vancouver.

There was much more satisfaction to be gained from feeling that other people were being offered things I myself believed in, rather than in just selling for the sake of making money — though we were most anxious to support the Gallery and did, over the years, contribute between a quarter million and a half million dollars to the Gallery's budget.

It was always rewarding to find an appreciative home for a particularly fine piece and I tried, as I am sure all dealers do in the case of really exceptional works, to see if they could be placed in a worthy private collection or better still, a public one. Sales to galleries or museums are, of course, the most satisfying, as one then knows that a great many people will be able to enjoy the works through the years and that they will be properly cared for and preserved. But those sales do not turn up every day.

Customers naturally varied considerably and one was always curious to see what would appeal to each of them. Some just wanted a souvenir or small gift, or even two similar carvings to use as book ends. But others, though uninitiated, proved much more interesting to serve, perhaps picking up an attractive small bird or animal to begin with, then spotting something considerably more subtle and ending up by buying one of the best (not necessarily major in size) carvings in the shop. As is well recognized, being enthusiastic about what one is selling can be contagious, and I still sometimes worry in case my personal excitement about certain works caused anyone to make a purchase which was later regretted.

In the course of time, we accumulated a group of steady customers who became familiar to us. A handful only wanted to be shown works by the 'big name' artists and so lost the opportunity of discovering and collecting fine carvings by people who were then less well known. It was difficult not to show at least a touch of impatience when someone peered briefly into the well-stocked display area saying 'Have you a Pauta bear?' Or 'Are there any pieces by

Latcholassie?' Or some such thing. What a dull and insensitive way to buy something to live with and enjoy!

It never ceased to be surprising when customers expected that works they had seen and admired elsewhere (in a shop in Ontario or in a friend's house in Vancouver, for instance) could be duplicated like commercial reproductions or tins of vegetables. Again and again through the years, I was asked if I could find a 'carbon copy' of a particular carving which someone described or illustrated for me. Of course, that was almost impossible and many hours at the wholesale outlet were wasted trying to locate the unattainable. However, to my amazement, once there was total success. An Australian visitor on his way back home drew a picture of a bird he had seen and admired in Eastern Canada and which, when he returned to buy it, had been sold. As usual, he was told it was most unlikely anything could be done for him, but, lo and behold, on the next buying trip, there waiting on a display stand was an exact likeness of the one he had drawn, and, what was more, it was a very good carving. Naturally, I jumped at it, and later had it photographed for the customer. Finally it arrived at his home in Australia after we had personally delivered it to the dockside and started it on the long ocean voyage. He was immensely pleased with the carving and the service, but probably never realized how lucky he was to have received exactly what he wanted.

One summer day a young tourist from Germany allowed himself to fall for a stone figure weighing about twenty pounds. He was carrying an overnight bag and just leaving for the airport, so we agreed to mail all the bag's contents back to Europe in order that he could board his plane with the carving, trying valiantly to look as though his carry-on luggage only contained the usual overnight accessories.

Many of us became very fond of the strange imaginative beasts carved by Miki at Whale Cove and Eskimo Point and once we had a fascinating one-man show of his works. As a result, some of his finest and most unusual carvings are now in Vancouver collections. Miki seems to be an artist whose works are either thoroughly enjoyed or simply don't appeal — there is no middle ground. I suppose it depends on the viewer's own imagination and perception.

Pudlo — that free spirit — was a personal favourite of mine, in spite of the occasional uneven quality of his work. Throughout the ten or so years that I was privileged to buy and sell Inuit art several really stunning works by Pudlo were handled by the shop, one of which (an owl, though it looks more like the spirit of all owls) was, with a bit of persuasion, bought by a patron and donated to the Vancouver Art Gallery's collection, and gained the distinction of being included in the Masterworks Exhibition. Another, a creamy white soapstone bear, is the centrepiece of a private Vancouver collection and has also been publicly exhibited at least once. So I am able to feel completely satisfied when I think of those two outstanding works.

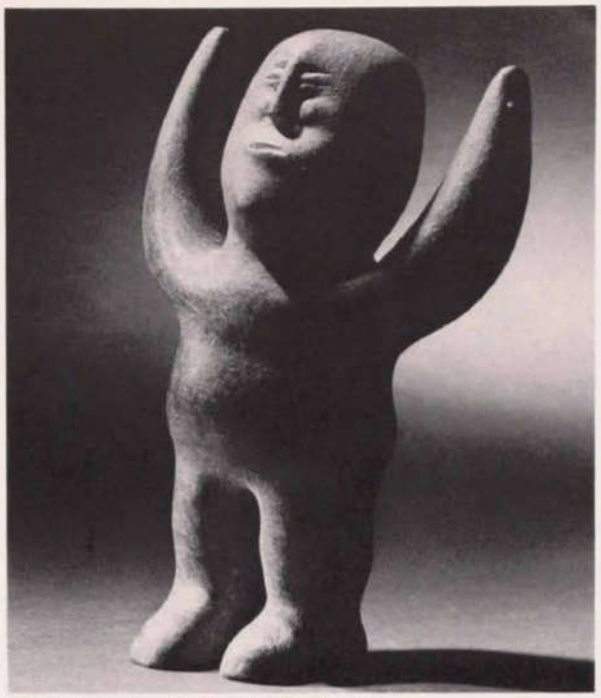
Betty Bell (centre) at work in the Gallery Shop, October 1976, with volunteers Mary Stewart (left) and Theodora Bell-Irving.

John Denniston, Vancouver Province

One lone carving by the famous Tiktak — a timeless figure obtained directly from Rankin Inlet — passed through our hands and is now in the Inuit art collection at Simon Fraser University; and two other fine sculptures from the shop — one an exceptionally large abstract piece by George Arlook, and the other, a big rugged, even jagged, figure in dark stone by Kavik, both emanating from Rankin Inlet — joined the Pudlo owl in the Vancouver Art Gallery's collection. Several important and compelling whale-bone carvings from Pangnirtung — two or three being by Manaipik, a carver who always impressed me, were sold a year or so before the end of our operation of the shop; the majority of them, like countless other fine works, went to the United States before the shipment of whale bone across the border was prohibited. Some visiting physicists from Ann Arbour, Michigan, taking part in a gathering at the University of British Columbia, are now the owners of several of the strongest of Manaipik's sculptures, including the largest piece of his that I have seen — a haunting figure of a man. Mathematicians and physicists so often seemed to be among our most perceptive customers for Inuit art. However, much as one liked to see the best works remain in Canada, I think it was often equally important to me to know that these special carvings were going where they would obviously be intensely appreciated. Whatever their final destination, I missed some of them for a long time after they found new homes.

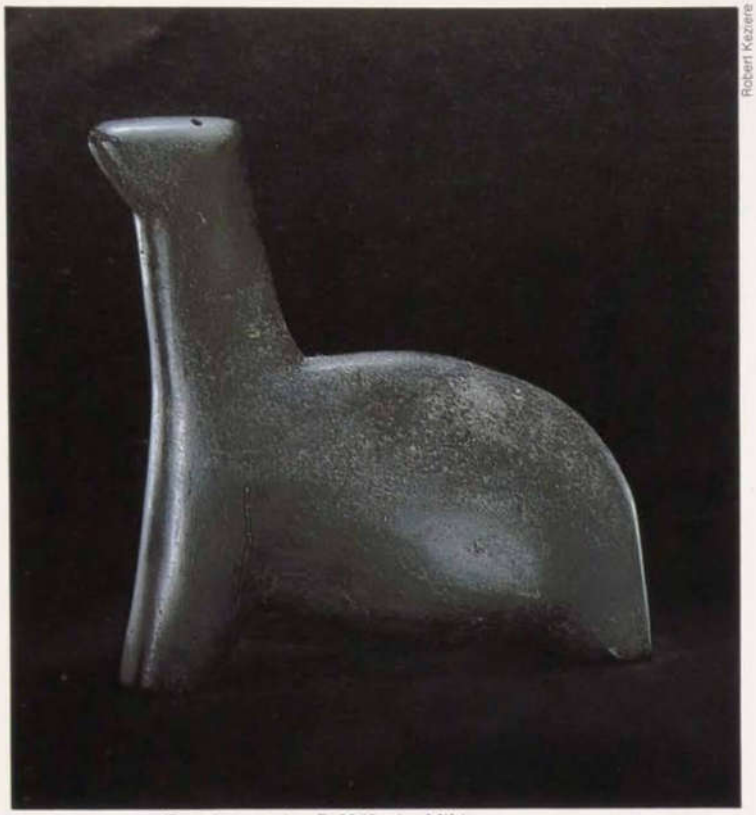
Apart from the important large sculptures already mentioned, I particularly remember some smaller but exceptional carvings, such as a classic bear in serpentine from Cape Dorset, possibly by Kaka, dating from the mid-sixties. Luckily that piece caught the eye of discriminating friends of mine, so from time to time I can still see and admire it. A small but most unusual bird's nest from Baker Lake, complete with simplified baby birds with beaks agape — which sounds like a most unlikely motif — also continues to stay in my mind, and one really tiny but beautiful piece by Anaija of Spence Bay proved irresistible and has just been returned to my mantlepiece after its inclusion in an exhibition arranged by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. The subject is Sedna, holding a stone lamp in front of her as she swims. But hundreds of pieces of all sizes and descriptions, which I have loved, are scattered far and wide.

My work as a member of the Gallery Shop Committee wasn't all involved with shopkeeping. For instance, a day might sometimes be taken up with arrangements for shipping Inuit carvings abroad. These were only occasional events, but to someone who loves ships and has travelled on a freighter, it was always exciting to track down through the various shipping agencies a vessel about to leave for some particular distant port. Then when a ship had been found and the forwarding of our crate arranged, we visited the agent for the vessel and filled out the countless forms for the shipping company, insurance firms and customs. By the time we took our crate down we almost felt we were embarking on a voyage ourselves.



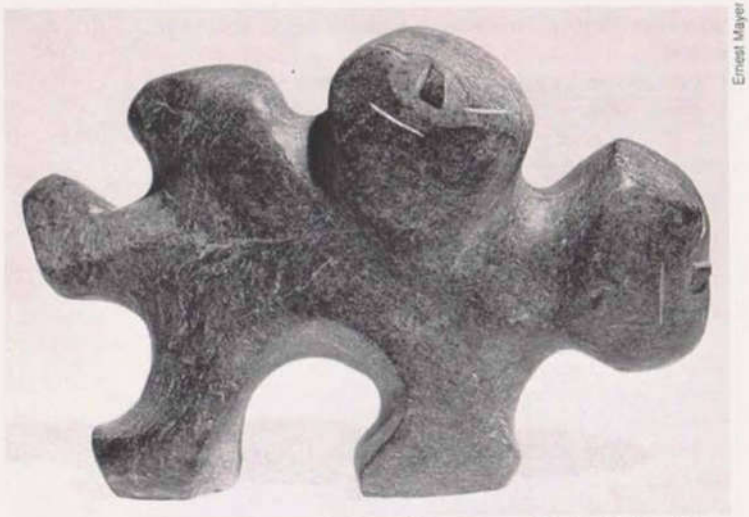
'Man', 1960s, by Tiktak of Rankin Inlet. From a private collection, Winnipeg.

I once spent another and totally different, out-of-the-way morning down in the bowels of the Vancouver Police Station. We had been notified that a quantity of stolen property was being held there and that the suspect had offered the information that some of the Inuit carvings included in his loot came from the Gallery Shop. Trying to identify a dozen or so small carvings which had been shop-lifted over a period of months or years was pretty difficult. One particular piece (a very tender black stone bird from Baker Lake) caught my eye at once. I had been particularly attracted by it and had no idea it had been stolen. But some of the very small birds and animals, which were certainly ones I might have selected, were far less simple to be certain of, although I was quite positive I had never chosen a number of them. I tried to be honest, but on the other hand it seemed to me (perhaps erroneously) that the police appeared anxious for me to identify more than I honestly could. I am sure they wanted to clear the matter up and I gathered that people from other shops which had also suffered losses to this particular shop-lifter were equally uncertain of which piece was



Robert Keziere

'Imaginary animal', 1960s, by Miki.
From a private collection, Vancouver.



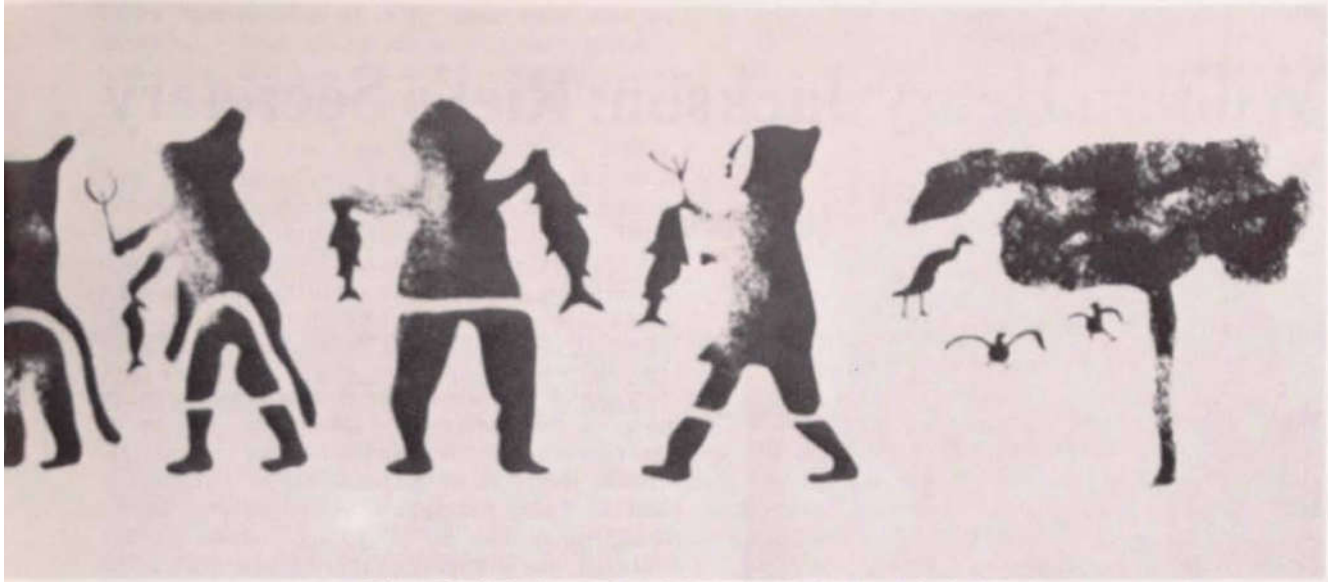
Ernest Mayer

'Figure with Two Heads', 1972, by George Arlook, Rankin Inlet.
From the George Swinton Collection in the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

or was not from their stock. I still remember that day and how claustrophobic it was down there as door after door was unlocked and then clanged to behind me.

Print openings were, as they are for all the dealers, a wild scramble. I am sure I am right in saying that we initiated, for Vancouver outlets, the system of giving numbered tickets to customers in the order of their arrival, so as to prevent scenes when two people claimed the same print. In spite of the precaution there often seemed to be some contretemps. Print collectors are an intense and competitive group. We even once had several prospective customers lying at the head of the Art Gallery steps on camp-cots all night, awaiting the hour of the sale. Kenojuak's prints, as was the case everywhere for years, were the most sought after, though seldom my favourites. Her lovely 'Enchanted Owl' certainly was responsible for a lot of greed after it brought astronomical prices on the resale market; it gave a tremendous boost to the popularity and appreciation of the prints in general. By far the most exciting to me of all the prints that we ever stocked were those compelling and direct Cape Dorset intaglios and stone-cuts from the early sixties which were lying unsold in drawers at Canadian Arctic Producers and many of which we had the good fortune to handle later. I am thinking of the 1961 and 1962 prints by Parr, Kiakshuk, Ottochie and Kananginak, among others, and of my excitement when I was first shown these in Ottawa and permitted to select some for the shop. It seemed the most amazing treasure trove.

In retrospect it seems that perhaps the occasion I enjoyed the most during those years was arranging a special display for the sake of the delegates to the



'Eskimo Family Caching Fish', Sealskin print, 1961, by Kiakshuk of Cape Dorset.

Habitat Conference in 1975. Our idea was to show these thoughtful people from all the corners of the earth an outstanding collection of works by Canadian native artists, as well as the best of British Columbia's crafts. With the help of our suppliers we did gather together in the Inuit department a stunning display, including (apart from selected carvings and our stock of prints) some of those lovely embroidered garments, dolls and birds made at Spence Bay under Judy McGrath's direction; a group of the rare and expertly made baskets from Nouveau Québec, as well as some of their sumptuously dressed dolls; and great bold and exciting Baker Lake wall hangings with their embroidered and appliquéd designs. With everyone making a special effort in each of our departments, the shop looked more elegant than it had ever done before and the visitors were impressed and most complimentary; but few had much money to spend (as we had more or less anticipated).

So while the objective of letting the visitors see the best work we could accumulate was accomplished, the big sale of these beautiful things came a little later as the summer tourists arrived. I think *all* my special and expensive stock was sold before autumn, except for some of the Baker Lake hangings. This was very satisfying and also a bit of a relief. There was always the possibility of going overboard in one's enthusiasm.

In 1977, by mutual agreement, the volunteer operation of the Gallery Shop came to an end after thirteen strenuous but rewarding years, and it is now being run professionally. But for all the time when it was in our care, it was a fulfilling and exciting experience to be spending my days amongst memorable works by Inuit artists, and to have had countless unforgettable contacts with people from round the globe. ◆

Animal stone, undated, by Miki. From the collection of Stanley and Jean Zazelenchuk, in the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

William Henry Jackson: Riel's Secretary

By Donald B. Smith

THE TRIAL of William Henry Jackson began sharply at 3:30 p.m. It took place in a tiny, stuffy court-house located in the middle of one of the bleakest spots on the Canadian prairies. Just three years earlier, in 1882, Edgar Dewdney, the federally appointed Lieutenant-Governor, had selected this desolate, treeless plain as the site of the new capital of the North-West Territories. Until Dewdney had placed his stubby finger down on Pile o' Bones Creek, the natural and favoured choice had been the broad, wooded Qu'Appelle Valley, lying only a few miles to the north-west. It seemed the ideal site, blessed with wood, water, and a beautiful setting. While Dewdney privately might have agreed, publicly he could not, for the Lieutenant-Governor and several friends and fellow Conservative supporters held a tract of 480 acres surrounding Pile o'Bones Crossing, from which, if it could be sold, they stood to gain (at 1882 prices) a million and a half dollars. Not surprisingly, in light of his personal land holdings, Dewdney elevated Pile o' Bones (hastily renamed 'Regina' several months later) to the dignity of the territorial capital.

It was just such political opportunism that had enraged William Henry Jackson, the short, slight man in the prisoner's dock. He had devoted over a year of his life to the fight against the 'enemy', a Conservative government which, he firmly believed, unceasingly worked to enrich its own party supporters at the expense of the common people. Over the course of the last twelve months he had championed the rights of the poor settlers, as well as those of the Indians and Métis. In an age of opportunistic politicians and real-estate speculators, William Henry Jackson stands out as a refreshing contrast. Today he might be renowned as a 'muck-raking' journalist, or a young, reform-minded politician. But in Regina on that hot afternoon of 24 July 1885, he sat in the prisoner's box, accused before the elderly, bearded Judge Hugh Richardson of 'treason-felony', a charge but one degree below that of treason, which carried the death penalty.

Four days earlier the small brick building had almost burst at its seams. The trial of Louis Riel, the man accused by the Canadian government of instigating the 1885 Rebellion, had opened at 11 o'clock on 20 July. The lawyers in their black gowns and white ties sat at the barristers' table facing Judge Richardson, the Justice of the Peace, and the court clerk. In the close confined quarters, the onlookers — men in dark coats, vests and ties; officers in scarlet tunics; and a scattering of their wives — suffered silently in the oppressive heat of mid-July.

On the 21st Riel's defence lawyers requested one month's adjournment in order to secure the presence of a long list of witnesses. Richardson summarily gave them just one week. On 28 July Riel's trial would resume. Judge Richardson profited from this adjournment to bring forward what promised to be the speedy trial of William Henry Jackson. How could there be any delays in the trial of a man whom the Crown, his own defence lawyer, and his family, believed was 'insane', and consequently not responsible for his actions in Riel's camp?

Judge Richardson gravely read the indictment, in all its solemn and imposing terminology: '. . . that William Henry Jackson . . . feloniously and wickedly did compass, imagine, and intend to deprive and depose our said Lady the Queen from the style, honor and royal name of the Imperial Crown of this realm . . .' Then the trial took a bizarre twist. In his ill-fitting clothes, the prisoner suddenly rose and replied to the charge in his loud, booming voice, which seemed to have no connection at all with his physical size. Without any equivocation he stated: 'As

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Donald B. Smith is an associate professor with the department of history, University of Calgary.

This article was first delivered as a lecture in the Pelletier-Lathlin Memorial Lecture Series, department of native studies, Brandon University, 13 March 1980.

The author wishes to thank Professor Cyril Greenland, school of social work, McMaster University; Dr John D. Griffin, formerly General Director, Canadian Mental Health Association; and Dr Thomas Flanagan, department of political science, University of Calgary for kindly allowing him to examine their research materials on William Henry Jackson. He also wishes to thank Cicely Plaxton, niece of William Jackson, for generously allowing him to examine old family photographs.

far as responsibility of mine about what you call rebellion, I have always declared myself perfectly responsible, that is to say, as Riel's secretary, and I wish to share his fate whatever that may be.'

The rebellion was over. Batoche fell on 12 May. Riel gave himself up on the 15th. Poundmaker surrendered on the 26th. Big Bear, the last important Cree insurgent, turned himself in on 2 July. Yet here was William Henry Jackson refusing to give way. He wanted a real trial, one in which the just grievances of the native insurgents, and the shortcomings of both Prime Minister John A. Macdonald, and his agent, Edgar Dewdney, would be discussed and truly explored. But the court coldly, and summarily, denied his request.

What followed lasted less than thirty minutes. On the testimony of Eastwood Jackson, his own brother, who had observed him while himself a prisoner of Riel's, and the medical opinion of two doctors who examined the prisoner in Regina five weeks after the fall of Batoche, the six-man jury concurred with the Crown and defence counsel. To quote the Regina *Leader*, 'William Henry Jackson, charged with treason-felony tried to-day, was proved insane and sentenced to be kept in the guard room, Regina, during the pleasure of the Lieutenant-Governor.' Two weeks later, Dewdney committed the prisoner to the Selkirk Lunatic Asylum in Manitoba. It seemed a strange ending to the career of Louis Riel's 'secretary'.

How had this young man of twenty-four, born and raised in Ontario, the son of two devoted church-going Methodists, come to cast in his lot with Louis Riel, a French-speaking, mixed-blood Roman Catholic? Why did he fiercely champion the rights of 'half-breeds' and 'savages', two groups soundly vilified by most of his white contemporaries? Was he indeed mentally unbalanced as his jury in 1885, and most Canadian historians, have subsequently claimed? Or was the defendant, as he thundered out in the middle of his trial, 'perfectly sane' at Batoche? Any examination of the early life of William Henry Jackson should begin in his native province, then, a century ago, a bastion of racial intolerance.

Will Jackson was raised in the village of Wingham, in Huron County, Ontario. The Jackson family had arrived in Wingham in 1863 from Stanley's Mills, a tiny village in Peel County, situated roughly at the half-way point between Toronto and Brampton. The census of 1861 lists T. G. Jackson as a merchant, with three workers employed in his store. In the hamlet of 100 people, the young storekeeper also acted as the secretary for the trustees of the Methodist Church. His first son, Eastwood, was born at Stanley's Mills in 1859, and his daughter, Cicely, in 1863. William Henry, the second son, had arrived on 3 May 1861.

University Archives, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon

William Henry Jackson, Chicago, 1889. Jackson changed his name to 'Honore Joseph Jaxon' in Chicago in the late 1880s.

Unlike his older brother and his younger sister he was born in neighbouring Toronto where his parents lived briefly in 1861.

A religious atmosphere dominated the Jackson home. When the Methodist Church was being constructed in Wingham, the Jacksons turned over a room in their own house for church services. In the completed church, Mrs Jackson played the organ, and collected money for the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society.

True Methodists, Thomas and Elizabeth Jackson sternly prohibited smoking, drinking and card playing in their home; but they did encourage music. As a girl in England, Elizabeth had studied music, becoming an accomplished pianist. Often the family gathered around her piano in the parlour to sing harmoniously the grand old Methodist hymns and the popular songs of the day. If it is true that an ear for music and the gift for languages are allied, these family gatherings helped to develop Will's natural linguistic talent. As a young man he spoke French, and in 1884-85, probably learned a little Cree.

On account of Will's poor health, his well-educated mother taught him at home until he reached the age

Louis Riel addressing the jury in the courthouse in Regina, July 1885. From a photograph by O. B. Buell in the Public Archives of Canada.

of ten. From an early age she encouraged him to be independent in spirit. Elizabeth and her husband also instilled in their children a deep love of literature, especially history. Will, his eldest niece recalls, read his first history of ancient Greece and Rome at the age of eight. An avid reader until the year he died, the reflective youth, in his own words, constantly needed 'food for the mind'.

Will's interest in politics dated back to his childhood. His parents encouraged the children to discuss, and to keep abreast of current affairs. Thomas took Will to his first political meeting at the age of eleven. Around the dinner table at home the children learned of their father's political creed. Four years after Thomas Jackson left Wingham one of the townspeople still remembered his politics. 'Mr. Jackson the Elder', the staunch Conservative wrote the Toronto *Mail* on 3 July 1885, 'was always a most rabid Grit, though otherwise he was considered a very respectable man.'

One of his father's favourite figures in Canadian history, William Lyon Mackenzie, became a hero to Will. In the opinion of the Jackson family, the fiery journalist and organizer of the Upper Canadian Rebellion of 1837, truly had fought for the common man against the ruling government oligarchy. Years later, in 1884, Will told a public meeting near Prince Albert, North-West Territories: '. . . the best day that ever dawned for my native Province of Ontario was that cold December morning of 1837 when Wm. L. Mackenzie rebelled against the Family Compact. When he took up arms in defence of our civil and religious liberties'. Will began his political life with a strong aversion to the ruling Canadian political and economic elite.

The Red River uprising of 1869-70 occurred at the very moment when young Will's political consciousness was first awakening. The Métis, under Louis Riel, then only twenty-five years old, had set up a provisional government to protest the sale of their homeland by the Hudson's Bay Company to the Canadian government. Then, while his representatives were discussing with Prime Minister John A. Macdonald the terms of the Red River's entry into Confederation, Riel made one serious miscalculation. He hastily organized a court-martial that recommended the execution of Thomas Scott, a loud-mouthed, aggressive Orangeman from Ontario, one of a group of pro-expansionist Canadians who had clashed with the armed Métis supporting the provisional government. The next morning Riel allowed the sentence to be carried out. After the entry of Manitoba into Confederation an outraged Protestant Ontario made the executed Scott their martyr, and howled for Riel's head. To save himself the Métis leader slipped across the American border. He remained in the United States for the greater part of the next fourteen years, until arriving in the North-West Territories in July 1884.

Shortly after Scott's execution an angry meeting

Witnesses in the Riel Trial, Regina, July 1885. Eastwood Jackson, who testified that he believed his brother William insane, is at far right in the second row. From a photograph by O. B. Buell in the Glenbow Archives.

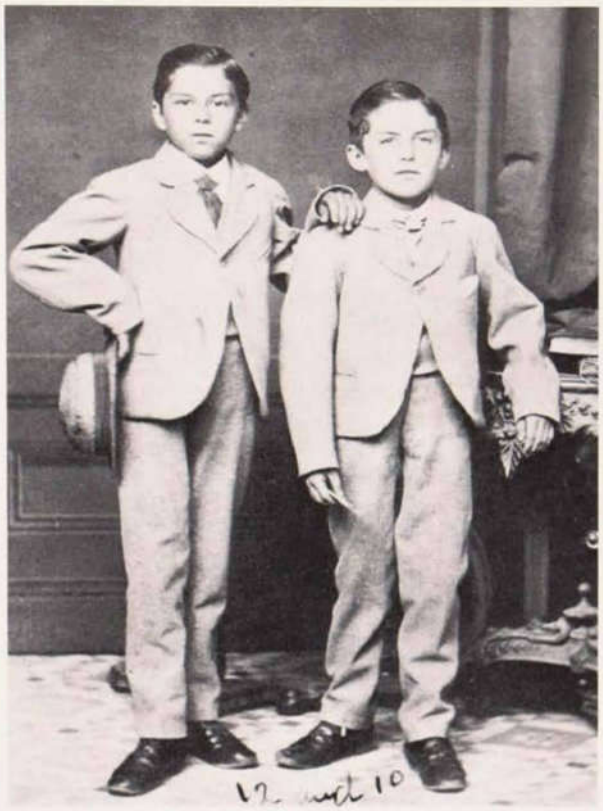
had taken place at Blyth, twenty kilometres south of Wingham, to demand a 'Rope for the Murderer Riel'. Will never forgot the hysterical hatred of the people in Huron County. In July 1884, he recalled in a speech delivered near Prince Albert how 'in my boyhood days', they portrayed Louis Riel, 'as a Cut-throat, an outlaw, bold braggart, and indeed the embodiment of nearly all that is evil.' Will's mind did not move in such conventional channels. In the Northwest he defended Riel's provisional government of 1869-70 as passionately as he had championed William Lyon Mackenzie in Ontario. He held John A. Macdonald responsible, as the Conservative Prime Minister had first negotiated with the Hudson's Bay Company, ignoring completely the rights of the Indians and Métis to their homeland.

Will's parents made every possible sacrifice in order to give their children a good education. In an age when few students completed high school, all three Jackson children left as graduates. Eastwood went on to become a pharmacist; Cicely, a teacher; and Will attended University College at the University of Toronto. He entered the Honours Classics course in the fall of 1877, having a few months earlier turned sixteen.

One century ago, University College had a few hundred undergraduates, all male, and just nine professors. For three years Will studied principally under the Reverend John McCaul, Professor of Classical Literature, Logic and Rhetoric, a former President of the University of Toronto, and the first professor appointed to King's College, as the University was then known in 1842. During his first two years he did very well, standing in the top quarter of his class of over forty.

McCaul instilled in Will a life-long love of the classics, which in later years became his refuge from the world around him. In the Northwest he took his Greek and Latin books with him when he went to live with the Métis at Batoche. One of his first requests at the lunatic asylum was to receive (from his parents' home) his copy of Plato's *Republic*, and his edition of Horace's poems. The love of liberty of the ancient Greeks and the Romans of the Republic attracted him to the classics. Over sixty years later, at the age of eighty-seven, he encouraged his great-nephew to continue studying Latin, and to begin Greek, in order to increase his 'passion for freedom'.

In his third year of college Will's university career ended when his father's business failed. Five years earlier, in 1875, a disastrous fire occurred in Lower Wingham which destroyed Peter Fisher's woollen mill, and several neighbouring buildings. The elder Jackson's fire losses compounded the problem of his generous financial practices. With thousands of dollars left uncollected on his books, his firm went bankrupt about 1880. Earlier Eastwood had left for Prince Albert in the District of Saskatchewan where he established the small town's first drug store. His father and mother joined him there in 1881; Will



William Henry Jackson (right) and his brother Eastwood, 1870. From the Jackson family album.

arrived in 1882, and Cicely, in 1883.

In 1881 Prince Albert, named in honour of Queen Victoria's late consort, celebrated its fifteenth birthday. Founded as a Presbyterian Indian Mission in 1866, a white settlement had slowly grown up around the original mission station, on the banks of the North Saskatchewan, about 700 kilometres north-west of Winnipeg. By Treaty Number Six signed in 1876, the Cree, Assiniboine, and Chipewyan Indians had surrendered all of the surrounding area, a vast land tract larger than all of England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland combined.

Without fully understanding the transaction, the Indians handed over their lands, receiving in return immediate presents, a cash annuity, the promise of schools on their 'reserves', and most important of all, in the event of 'any pestilence' or 'a general famine', the firm guarantee of government aid, 'sufficient to relieve the Indians from the calamity that shall have befallen them'. With the extermination of the last buffalo herds in the Canadian Northwest in 1879 they badly needed such help. In the early 1880s the proud Plains warriors, then reduced to subsisting on mice and gophers, settled on their reserves, and became dependent on government rations.

While the natives starved, the whites in the District of Lorne, the area around Prince Albert, initially prospered in the early 1880s. The white population rose dramatically from just over 800 in 1878, to roughly four times that number in 1881, and to nearly 5,000 in 1882. The Prince Albert district alone produced over half the wheat grown in the North-West Territories in 1881. Immigrant farmers flocked to one of the most fertile and best-settled regions west of Manitoba. By 1882 Prince Albert had become the commercial capital of the entire Saskatchewan Valley, the centre of a territory as large as southern Ontario itself. In contrast Battleford remained a tiny hamlet of wooden houses; Saskatoon, an obscure village site; and Regina, just chosen as the Territories' new capital, a scattered collection of tents and frame buildings.

When Will arrived in 1882 he first planned to homestead. Having read William Butler's stirring books of western adventure, *The Great Lone Land*, and *The Wild North Land*, he knew that Butler had wintered for three months in 1872 in a log cabin at the Forks of the North and South Saskatchewan, so he decided to settle there. But after a year the land proved too rugged for the inexperienced farmer. He then resigned himself to helping his father with his machine implement business in Prince Albert, and assisting him in clearing his homestead at the 'Point' on the South Saskatchewan, fifty kilometres east of Prince Albert, where Will himself had unsuccessfully homesteaded. By working with his father selling harrows, seeders and other farm implements, Will came into contact with most of the settlers in the district, and in 1883 fully learned their grievances.

Prince Albert's boom proved short-lived. The government suddenly changed the northern route of the Canadian Pacific Railway early in 1882, moving it southward away from Battleford and Edmonton, to Pile o' Bones Creek (Regina) and Calgary. No spur was sent north, leaving the Prince Albert settlers 300 kilometres from the 'steel'. The federal government appeared to have insensitively abandoned the northern farmers. Then to add insult to injury, it continued to enforce land regulations which seemed both harsh and unrealistic. Will's father himself lost his first homestead in 1882 when the Federal Land Agent claimed he had not fulfilled all the demanding terms of the Dominion Lands Act. Nature, too, suddenly turned against the District of Lorne, bringing forward early frosts which destroyed crops.

Even before the boom ended, Will Jackson participated in the politics of the District of Lorne. Like a western William Lyon Mackenzie he had brought a small printing press with him. During the election campaign of March and April 1883 to select the local representative to the North-West Territorial Council, the twenty-two-year-old editor published

several issues of what he called *The Voice of the People*. He attacked, in particular, Lawrence Clarke, the Hudson's Bay Company manager; and the small clique of Conservative Party supporters in Prince Albert whom he claimed monopolized all the government's contracts. Earnestly the young journalist argued: 'It is the duty of every patriotic citizen to vigorously oppose the aggrandizement of one class at the expense of another'. When a Settlers' Union was formed in 1884 the members, apparently impressed by *The Voice of the People*, selected Will, one of the best-educated men in the district, as their secretary.

To have the greatest impact in Ottawa Will realized that the settlers' demands must be combined with those of the English-speaking mixed-bloods living immediately south of Prince Albert on the 'Ridge', and with those of the Métis in their settlements of St Louis de Langevin, Grandin (St Laurent), and Batoche (St Antoine de Padoue), on the South Saskatchewan. These two groups, like the whites, lacked representation in Parliament. They suffered, too, from the government's tardiness in giving them official title to their lands. The mixed-bloods in the Northwest still had not received their land scrip promised in the Dominion Lands Act of 1878. Their numerous petitions had gone unanswered. In desperation they had sent in late May 1884 for Louis Riel, then living in Montana, to take charge of their dealings with the unresponsive Canadian Prime Minister John A. Macdonald, and his western agent, Lieutenant-Governor Edgar Dewdney.

As soon as Riel arrived in early July the vigilant young secretary of the Settlers' Union rode to the Métis settlements. Charles Nolin and Maxime Lépine later recalled how Will Jackson then stayed up all night talking to Riel at Nolin's house. The former leader of Red River's provisional government greatly impressed Will as a skilled politician, and as a man of extraordinary religious faith and piety. For several days Will stayed at the Nolins with Riel and his family. Like Father Fourmond, the Métis' priest, he saw how the mixed-bloods, many of them originally from the Red River, viewed Riel as their Joshua, their own prophet.

The enthusiastic young reformer eagerly became Riel's link with the English-speaking settlers. At public meetings he made the case for Riel, and on behalf of their joint 'movement' drafted petitions, messages, and letters. After Riel's firm declaration that he sought change through peaceful means, the man once cursed for murdering Thomas Scott surprisingly won over many of the discontented Prince Albert settlers, including Will's father and his brother Eastwood. Encouraged by the favourable response at a public meeting in Prince Albert on 19 July, Jackson and Riel began work on a petition for Ottawa. On 28 July Will outlined their aims in a clearly written manifesto to the people of Prince Albert:

'We are starting a movement in this settlement with a view to attaining Provincial Legislatures for the North West Territories and, if possible, the control of our own resources, that we may build our railroads and other works to serve our own interests rather than those of the Eastern Provinces. We are preparing a statement of our case to send to Ottawa . . .'

The Mounties, anxious to keep the peace in the Northwest, took note of the young Ontarian's contribution to the 'movement'. Sergeant Brooks at the South Branch of the Saskatchewan opposite Batoche commented to Inspector Crozier on 10 August that Will Jackson 'seems to be a right hand man of Riel. . . . He has a great deal to say and I believe he does more harm than any Breed among them.'

Announcement of a public meeting held in Blyth, Ontario, 20 April 1870 to protest Riel's execution of Thomas Scott. Blyth was near William Jackson's home in Wingham.

RED RIVER
OUTRAGE.

A Public Meeting of the inhabitants of Hullett, Morris and Wawanosh will be held in the

Village of Blyth,

ON

WEDNESDAY, 20th APRIL,

AT 4 O'CLOCK, P. M.

To afford Loyal People an opportunity of expressing their deep indignation at the vile crimes committed in Rupert's land, by imprisoning and murdering British and Canadian subjects. The honor of England was never outraged with impunity, and never will be. Let Canada not be degraded, the honor of the country must be maintained, the blood of the Martyred Scott must not cry in vain for vengeance. Let Canada speak out now, and let the assassin Riel feel that a Canadian must be like an ancient Roman, free from injury wherever he goes. The men that went to Magdalla can go to the Red River. Come all Loyal Men to the meeting, this is the common cause of all Canadians.

DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS WILL BE IN ATTENDANCE.

HURRAH FOR CANADA.

A ROPE FOR THE MURDERER RIEL!

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN!

Printed at the *New Era* Cheap Jo! Printing Establishment, Clinton.

Manitoba Archives

Historical Society of Montana

Louis Riel, c. 1876.

On Monday, 18 August, Riel and one of his lieutenants, Maxime Lépine, and Will, met with Big Bear at Eastwood Jackson's home in Prince Albert. Starvation and misery were everywhere, as the Indian Department, under Lieutenant-Governor Dewdney (who also served as the Indian Commissioner in Western Canada), had tried to economize by reducing expenditures on Indian rations, cutting them back to a bare minimum. Then Big Bear, the elderly Cree Chief who in Dewdney's own words 'has more influence than any Indian on the plains', asked Riel and the Jacksons one last question. After the mixed-bloods and whites had secured their rights, would they help the Indians to obtain theirs? Immediately Will made his own commitment, and courageously, if inopportunely, made it known.

Agreeing with Big Bear that his people had surrendered their birthright for a pittance, Will angrily told an audience at St Laurent on 1 September that the Northwest really belonged to the Indians and not to the Dominion of Canada. This shift toward the Indians' position immediately cost the 'movement' much of its support. The newly arrived white settlers still remembered the 'Minnesota Massacre' of 1862 in which 500 whites died at the hands of the Sioux, and the 'massacre' in 1876 of General Custer and all 225 men in his battalion at the Battle of the Little Big Horn. They feared the encouragement of a tribal uprising. The editor of the Prince Albert *Times*, who in May had included in his paper talk of an armed rebellion, switched by the early fall to a position of solid support for the government. With the *Times* went a number of the white settlers.

As the police kept track of all his activities, Will became apprehensive. He suspected that they even checked through his mail. On 29 September, Riel himself wrote Eastwood: '. . . rumors of pretty good source are getting afloat that the police are watching an opportunity to lay their hands on your brother. . . . If your brother finds himself unsafe, tell him that the french Halfbreeds invite him to come and remain this way amongst us. And if we are to be arrested, we will be together.'

In November Will did so, moving into Moise Ouellette's home, where Riel, his wife and two children also were staying. Moise's wife, Isabelle, was the sister of the greatest of the Métis hunters, Gabriel Dumont. While Riel spoke excellent English, many of the Métis like Gabriel Dumont and Maxime Lépine, did not. Cree was their second tongue. To them Will spoke, using his school French from Ontario, which he slowly adjusted to the Métis dialect, heavily influenced by Cree. From two letters written after the Rebellion, we know that he became quite fond of the young Rose Ouellette, Moise's sixteen-year-old daughter. Here among the Métis the highly imaginative secretary of the Settlers' Union gratefully found peace and friendship.

How strange it must have looked, the bookish, physically small Will Jackson beside big, burly, hardened men like Maxime Lépine and Gabriel Dumont. But Riel trusted him implicitly, as a man who earnestly tried to understand native grievances. In his diary in the fall of 1884 Riel wrote this prayer: '. . . we beg You through Jesus, Mary and Joseph to take care of them always, if You please: my friend William Henry Jackson, whom I have chosen as a special friend, and all his well-meaning followers.'

While among the Métis, Jackson moved emotionally ever more constantly toward them. Perhaps he romantically saw personified in the old Métis buffalo hunters, dressed in buckskin jackets, home-made cloth trousers, and moccasins, his heroes of antiquity. Like the early Greeks and Romans, they were simple and direct, hospitable and generous, brave in the hunt and in battle, men who felt not the slightest degree of subserviency to anyone except to their prophet, Riel. Similarly, Jackson came to idealize the Indian, whose life, in his words, was 'incomparably nearer to God than that of any average man taken from . . . what we call our civilization.' Most of all he admired the Indians for their freedom 'from selfishness, and from the grasping for property and riches as among the whites.'

Early in the fall Riel and Jackson prepared their

petition, polishing it up in November and December into its final form. As Riel stood delivering his thoughts, Will, seated, hastily jotted them down. On 16 December, Will, as 'Secretary, General Committee', sent the petition to Adolphe Chapleau, Secretary of State for Canada. The first point mentioned in the document emphasized the sad condition of the Indians, 'so reduced that the settlers in many localities are compelled to furnish them with food, partly to prevent them from dying at their door, partly to preserve the peace of the Territory'; the second recalled the still unfulfilled promise to the 'half-breeds' in the North-West Territories, that they would receive '240 acres of land, each, as did the Manitoba half-breeds.' Then followed requests on behalf of the 60,000 settlers in the Territories for provincial status (Manitoba only had 12,000 when it entered Confederation, and British Columbia 30,000), representation in the federal parliament and cabinet, and complete control over the Territories' natural resources. In retrospect the petition seems moderate and reasonable.

Initially encouraged by a perfunctory note from Ottawa acknowledging the petition's safe arrival, the energetic Jackson immediately began preparing the second document, the Bill of Rights, to be signed by the local committees in the District of Lorne as well as a revised version of the original petition. In a letter written on 27 January 1885, carried by Maxime Lépine to Riel, Jackson noted '. . . although as it is an English document you have left the wording to me yet the work itself is the resultant of our joint discussions'. On 2 February he wrote Albert Monkman, an English mixed-blood, to inform him that he would contact John Bright, and other reformers in the House of Commons in London, 'to champion our cause'.

Then, at this very moment, the enthusiastic Will struck a submerged rock. The Métis leader argued violently that the Northwest belonged forever to the native peoples. The Indians and Métis constituted its perpetual landlords; the land had been given to them by God for all time. Will disagreed — at this point limits existed to his championing of the native peoples. 'Why should God give a whole continent to 40,000 Indians and coop up 40,000,000 Englishmen on one little island?' Stating that the Indians, too, originally came from the Old World, Jackson continued, 'America was once without a man in it, why should a part of the human race go into that empty continent, and as soon as they have got there, turn round and forbid any more to come in, unless they pay for the privilege?' He wanted to see the Indian 'helped forward' by the white settlers 'to fill his place as a producer of wealth, and let the Indian and Half-breed scorn to charge a rent for the soil which God has given to man'.

Unable to tolerate contradiction, the high-strung Riel now regarded his English-Canadian ally in a new light. As early as January 1885 they differed, in Will's words, 'on certain theoretical points'. The Métis leader's distrust of his 'secretary' became so intense that after dining at Eastwood Jackson's in Prince Albert in mid-January, the overwrought Riel, now privately convinced that he was 'Prophet of the New World', suspected Will and Eastwood of trying to poison him. Anxiously Will ended his note to 'Mr. Riel' on 27 January, 'Be of good courage — Trust God whether you feel doubtful about me or not'.

In spite of his difference of opinion with Riel, Jackson proceeded. During early February, in the coldest weeks of a prairie winter, he gathered signatures for the petition and bill of rights and presented a document for signature delegating him, if necessary, to take the petition and bill of rights to the House of Commons in Ottawa. Having secured the signatures of the white settlers and English 'half-breed' members of the committee, he rode for the Métis settlements in mid-February. A strange welcome awaited him. All night, if we are to believe his brother Eastwood, Riel wildly chastised Will for his ideas on native land rights. Suspected as a traitor, like Thomas Scott in 1870, Riel (again if Eastwood's information collected several weeks later is correct) had his former associate tried by a council. Locked above the room in which his fate was being decided, Will heard the excited discussion, perhaps, too, the suggestion that he should be shot. Fortunately Riel forbade that, but ordered him confined for the present.

In Will's highly imaginative mind what thoughts pursued him? His concern for the Indians had been 'to become a bond between them and the whites', and now he had forfeited the trust of their kin, the Métis. Perhaps at the height of his anxiety while the council decided his fate, he privately made a vow. He would try, if spared, to come closer to the Métis by adopting their faith. At a public meeting at the Halcro settlement on 3 March, he fulfilled his promise, announcing his resignation as the secretary of the Settlers' Union, then adding that he intended to study the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church. For two weeks he prepared himself, while living with Riel and his family. Father Fourmond and the other priests believed him to be perfectly sane, baptizing him as 'William Henry Joseph Jackson' on 18 March.

No single act could have caused more pain and anguish to his own family than to hear his religious intentions. While Thomas and Elizabeth Jackson had always been open and tolerant, for all of their lives they had been exposed to the virulent anti-Catholicism of the Methodist Church. Thomas Jackson went immediately to Riel's house on 5 March to try and change his son's mind. Will, 'absorbed in religious study', refused to re-consider.

Artist's sketch of the Battle of Fish Creek, 24 April 1885. General Middleton's troops exchange fire with Gabriel Dumont's rebel forces concealed in the bushes along the creek below. From 'The Canadian Pictorial and Illustrated War News', 4 July 1885.

At Will's trial on 24 July Eastwood stated, 'from the time he was christened in the Roman Catholic Church he has been insane.'

Only one day after Will accepted Catholicism Riel revealed his innermost secret. On 19 March, for the first time, the Métis leader spoke to him of his 'new' religion, announcing himself, in Will's words, 'the prophet of the New World — endowed with the authority to grant absolution which I believed to be vested only in the priests of the Roman Catholic Church as the representatives of the Pope, and invested with an authority and mission which gave him precedence of even the Pope himself on this continent'. Would Will accept his mission? For a week he struggled with the problem. Politically he had entered into a love affair with Riel, whom he saw as the 'voice' of the 'aboriginals' throughout the world.

Over the course of the following week, in the midst of an armed camp, the situation deteriorated as Riel moved his forces towards open rebellion. Will felt completely torn; in his words, 'to one side I was allied by blood, to the other by ties of religion, friendship and concurrence in certain political views.' He tried to keep neutral, and bring about a peaceful understanding between the two, while continuing to act as Riel's secretary. Meanwhile, he troubled himself over Riel's divine 'mission'.

Finally Will accepted it. On 25 March in his state of religious excitement he became convinced of Riel's 'supernatural power', that he could communicate to him telepathically. That very evening Riel left for Duck Lake with a party of armed Métis to join Gabriel Dumont. As penance for not immediately following him, the first and only English-Canadian convert to the 'new' religion of Louis Riel walked for three miles over the snow, wearing on his feet moccasins alone, without socks. A full moon shone above. His feet were not frozen, yet one additional sign from God. Enthusiastically he wrote shortly after the clash at Duck Lake on 26 March: 'We have thrown off the yoke of the Roman Pope and accepted Louis David Riel as our prophet.'

Will had intended to join up with Riel's party early the next morning. Suspecting him of staying behind on account of his fear of the police, the Métis left

behind at Batoche detained him by force. Wishing to bring about 'a peaceful arrangement between the Indians and white settlers', he forever regretted his absence. Taken to Duck Lake the day after the battle the young idealist became convinced 'that God wished me to go and live among the Indians partly by way of penance and acquiring a natural method of life partly to become a bond between them and the whites.' The Métis interpreted his attempts to escape to the Indians 'as the effect of insanity by the half-breeds who trusted me, and as attempts to desert to the Police by those who did not'. Will became one of their eight prisoners, joined by his brother Eastwood who was detained when he came to obtain Will's release in early April.

While the battles of Fish Creek and Batoche raged Will remained his leader's captive, lodged with the others in the small cellar of a house at Batoche. He bore no resentment against Riel. He felt that 'the known friendship of at least one white man had a salutary effect upon the dispositions of the Indians toward the prisoners, although I do not believe Mr. Riel would have permitted them to be massacred in any case.' Will Jackson stayed true to Riel and the Métis. Writing sixty-six years later he again stated his desire 'to promote the happiness and peace of mind of the French-Indian people . . . a people whose fine qualities were revealed to me during their struggle against great hardship.'

On 12 May Canadian troops chained Jackson to an Indian prisoner and took him to the small jail in Prince Albert. No charges were made. Thrown into a lock-up no bigger than the cellar at Batoche (8' x 10'), he stayed with five Métis. The cell lacked a chair, table, or bed; the men slept on the vermin-infested floor with only a blanket. A month later Jackson, again chained to an Indian, was taken with Maxime Lépine and forty other prisoners down to Regina. The soldiers staked him out one night on the ground, his arms so tied that he could not kill the swarms of mosquitoes hovering over him. The soldiers maliciously told the 'Indian-lover' that he would be hanged when they reached Regina.

Only in the North West Mounted Police barracks in Regina did Will finally obtain proper attention. On 26 June, he wrote from his cell to one of the men he held directly responsible for the rebellion, the 'Hon. Edgar Dewdney, Lieut. Gov. N.W.T.'. He suggested that Dewdney 'and such other members of the council as may be appointed for that purpose "meet" Monsieur Riel, assisted perhaps by Messrs. Ouellette, Nolin, Lepine and Champagne . . . myself continuing to act as Mr. Riel's private secretary, or in whatever capacity might best further the interests of our combined movement — for such I conceive it ought to be.' He wanted the 'objects of the movement' explained, in order that 'a general conference might be opened at which everything could be settled in detail so far as the North West is concerned.' When Dewdney received the letter he penned a short note to John A. Macdonald: 'I enclose a copy of a letter received from Jackson who is one of the Rebels in gaol here — I think he *is* crazy.' Everyone else in officialdom concurred.

Who really can be held responsible for the Rebellion? To a certain extent John A. Macdonald and his Indian Commissioner and Lieutenant-Governor Edgar Dewdney bear much of the blame. In 1884 the government 'saved' $74,121 through its program of reducing expenditures. But the total cost of the rebellion exceeded $5 million and one must include the deaths of over 100 men. Jackson might have exaggerated slightly on 20 March 1885 when he wrote that 'the tyrannical attitude displayed for fifteen years by the Canadian Government toward the needy Indians, the poor and humble Half-breed and even toward the immigrant population', made some form of protest inevitable. Yet, the thrust of his remarks is correct.

Macdonald's comment on 20 November 1885 that 'the execution of Riel will have, I hope, a good effect on the Metis — the executions of 27 of the Indians ought to convince the Red Men that the White Man rules', reveals his own ignorance of the causes of the native uprising that he largely brought about himself. Discontent was ripe in the West, as much as it was in Upper Canada in the early winter of 1837. Strangely enough, it is Maxime Lépine's great-grandson, Howard Adams, now teaching at the University of California, who alone of today's commentators on the Rebellion Trials has suggested Jackson's importance. In 1975 he wrote in his fiery and poorly documented tract, *Prison of Grass: Canada from the Native Point of View*:

'The federal government wanted Jackson out of the way to avoid a public trial that might reveal the truth about the economic and political issues behind the white people's participation in the struggle. Ottawa therefore placed the entire blame for the rebellion on Riel and silenced Jackson, one of the main leaders of the agitation.'

What eventually happened to Will Jackson? In early November 1885, he simply walked away from the lunatic asylum twenty-five kilometres north of Winnipeg, and escaped to the United States. In Chicago he became a local union leader, active in that city for the next twenty years. He died in New York City on 10 January 1952 at the age of ninety, sixty-seven years after the rebellion. Writing to his niece Mary three years before, he mentioned that his favourite poet was Scotland's Robert Burns, adding, 'the world has not yet caught up with his profound humanitarianism and independence of thought.' That sentence in itself is Will Jackson's own best epitaph.◆

THE WAY IT WAS

Inuit Life in the Central Arctic

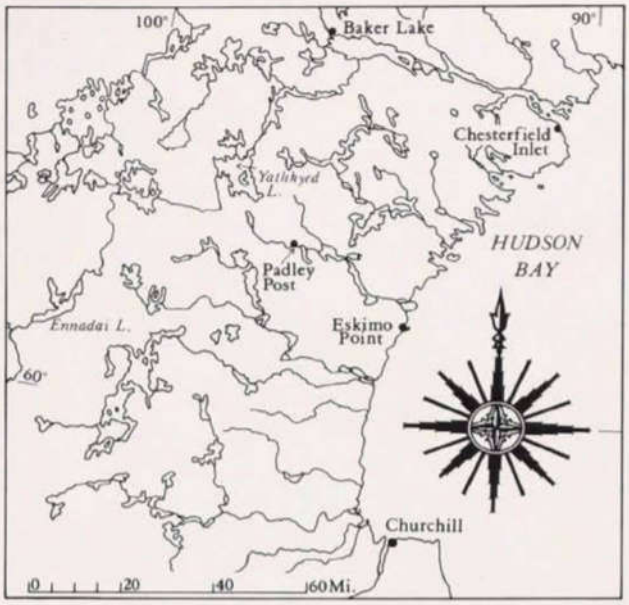
Photographs by Richard Harrington

The country around the Padley post in the central Arctic is at the edge of the tree-line. In this view, an Inuit hunter travels through stunted trees with his loaded kamotik.

Thirty years ago photographer and author Richard Harrington travelled by dog-team through the small Inuit camps of the central Arctic. His photographs record a way of life that has changed more in the past three decades than in all previous centuries.

The photographs here are a selection from Harrington's book *'The Inuit: Life as it Was'* to be published this fall by Hurtig Publishers of Edmonton.

Old weapons such as this bow of muskox horn and braided sinew are rare today. The caribou-skin clothing consisted of an inner suit with hair turned in against the flesh, and a loose outer suit with the hair turned outward to the elements.



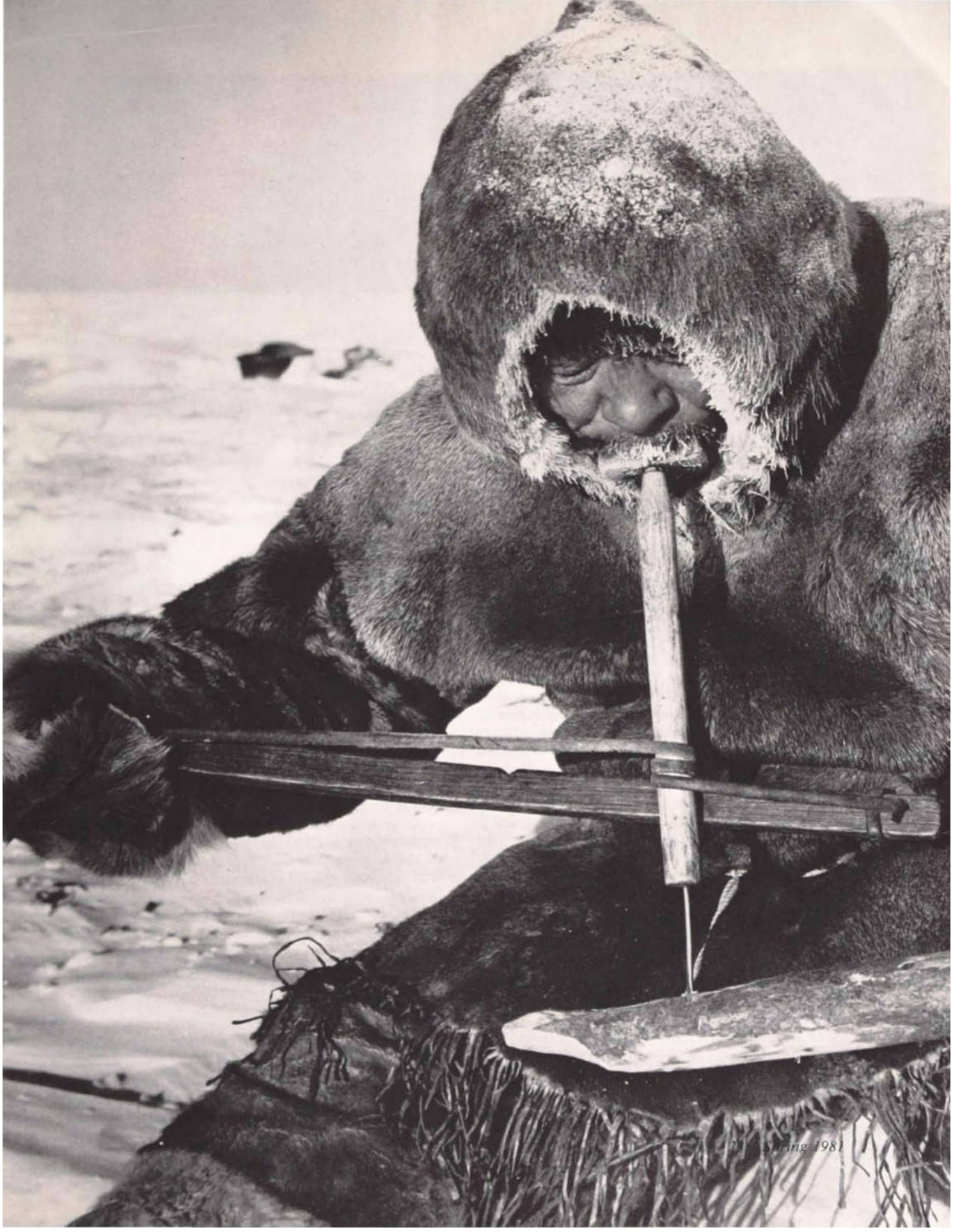
A Padlimuit family at the edge of the tree-line live in a log house chinked with turf. The mother scrapes a skin while the father tries a tune on a violin that he made from a bacon tin.

When the caribou did not come, the Inuit at Padley suffered from hunger and cold. Here a mother feeds her child a bit of meat, chewed to soften it.

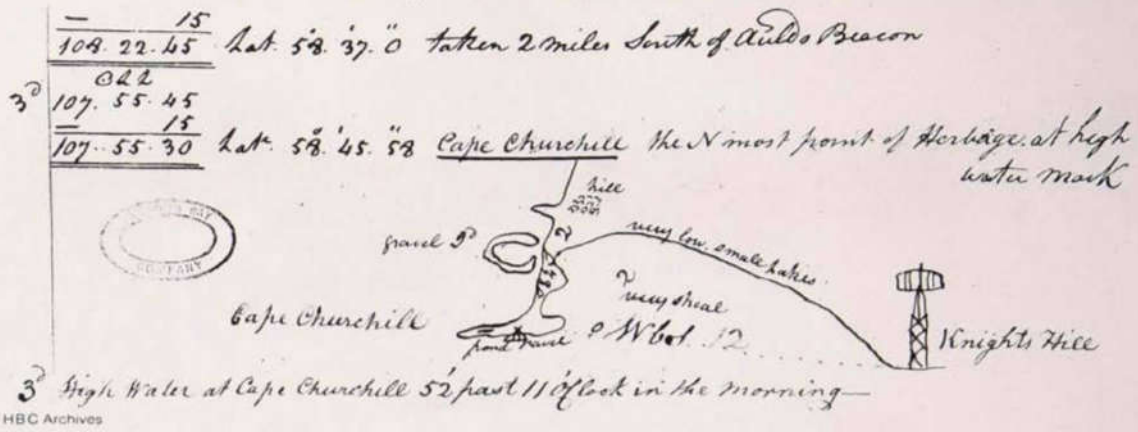
This little girl suspects that the photographer wants her doll. The doll is clad in ground-squirrel skins; the child wears caribou skin trimmed with wolverine.

A young woman in labour in a deserted snow-house at a 'starvation camp' near Padley.

An Inuit hunter uses his bow-drill, which he stabilizes with his teeth, for boring a hole in the runner of his kamotik.



'Cumberland House to Churchill' showing the beacon at Knight's Hill and the tipi at Cape Churchill. Peter Fidler, 1807.


Lat. 58. 37. 0 taken 2 miles South of Auld's Beacon
Lat. 58. 45. 58 Cape Churchill the N most point of Herbidge at high water mark
Cape Churchill
Knights Hill
High Water at Cape Churchill 52 past 11 O'Clock in the Morning—

HBC Archives

KNIGHTS HILL

By Fred Cooke

Professor Cooke is with the department of biology, Queen's University. Photographs are from the author's collection. Maps and quotations from its archives are published by permission of the Hudson's Bay Company.

IN THE EARLIER RECORDS of human activity in the Hudson Bay region, there is a well-documented picture of life in the various settlements around the Bay. Knowledge of the land between the settlements is much less complete and in many cases non-existent. The journals of the Hudson's Bay Company report in detail the activities around the forts but make only cursory comments on the travels from the forts which were a regular feature of life. A typical entry in the journal from Prince of Wales's Fort for 17 January 1754 by Ferdinand Jacobs reads '. . . at a Eleven clock this morning here came Humfrey Martin, Andrew Graham and four Indian Men from New York Fort for Trading goods and other necessarys for Mr. Isham, from who I rec[d] letters . . .' The 140-mile walk elicits no further comment than this.

Thus when I started to enquire about the history of the Knights Hill and Cape Churchill area, a low-lying tundra area along the coast due east of the present town of Churchill, Manitoba, I had considerable doubts about my chances of success. Cape Churchill is the most prominent geographic feature on the west coast of Hudson Bay. The coastline bears north from Fort York and the Nelson River approximately 125 miles to Cape Churchill at which point it turns sharply west for more than 40 miles before resuming its northward direction. This coastline is shallow with extensive tidal flats and many large submerged glacial erratics to endanger the coastline shipping. The land too is low-lying and treeless with many tundra pools, marshy areas, hummocky bog and salt marsh. The boreal forest is no closer than eight miles from the sea-shore. Apart from a few eskers and beach ridges, the only high ground is the remarkable and historic Knights Hill, a glacial deposit rising some 63 feet above sea level. It is located on an esker two miles from the sea and some 20 miles west of Cape Churchill. It is the highest land between the Churchill and Nelson Rivers.

W. Coats in his book *The Geography of Hudson's Bay between 1727-1751* provided us with a teleological explanation for the existence of Knight's Hill. 'In coasting along to Cape Churchill eight leagues from Usquemow Point [this is at the mouth of the Churchill River], you meet the sholes of Knights Hill, a remarkable spot of earth, deposited in a fenn, to

The snow goose flock near the Tundra Biology Station established by Queen's University in the delta of the Mast River.

caution seamen of those dangers near it, whose banks and ridges run of to sea six miles . . .'

My own interest in the region arose originally from the snow goose colony in the bay which lies between Knights Hill and Cape Churchill. This bay, now called La Pérouse Bay after Comte de Lapérouse, the French admiral who sacked Prince of Wales's Fort and Fort York, was known in earlier times as Knights Hill Bight. The snow geese nest colonially around the shores of Knights Hill Bight and a team of biologists from Queen's University has been studying this colony of 3,000-4,000 breeding pairs since 1968. Many of the geese nest in the delta of the Mast River and it is on an island in this delta that the Queen's University Tundra Biology Station is located. In addition to the snow geese the area is rich in wildlife. Many species of ducks and shorebirds can be found nesting. Caribou range widely in small numbers and the area contains in the summer and fall, one of the highest concentrations of polar bears in the world. In midsummer the tundra is brightened by flowers: Indian paint brush, arctic avens, arctic primrose and many other delicate northern flowers. Because of the richness of the flora and fauna the area has recently been set aside by the Manitoba Government as a wildlife management area.

Traditional wisdom among wildlife biologists is that the snow goose colony at La Pérouse Bay is of recent origin. A survey flight over La Pérouse Bay in 1963 in late July detected 2,000 geese, many of them young birds hatched near by. A similar flight in 1962 had failed to locate any snow geese. It was thus surmised that the colony was established in 1963 probably by birds which traditionally nested further north but which, in the spring, had stopped south of their usual nesting areas, found it to their liking and stayed to breed. Once established, the birds now return to where they nested in the previous year.

Why in 1963 did they suddenly decide to nest at La Pérouse Bay? If one examines the scientific literature carefully, there are reports of geese nesting at La Pérouse Bay in 1953 and 1956, and personnel from the Defence Research Board who visited much of this area in the 1950s and 1960s report nesting snow geese in each of the summers of 1951 through 1954. In fact, the 1962 report seems to be one of the few

occasions in recent history when nesting was not detected, although information appears to be lacking for several years. Mr Harry Lumsden, an eminent waterfowl biologist, visited the area for several days in July 1943 and saw no sign of nesting snow geese. There are several possible explanations for the absence of geese from a normally productive colony. The observers may have failed by chance to locate the post-hatch feeding flocks, or in a particular year all the geese in the area may have failed to breed because of prolonged adverse weather conditions early in the season. This is a phenomenon frequently reported from the more northerly colonies.

It seemed to me to be important to find out whether there were more historical records of snow geese nesting at La Pérouse Bay and so this led to a historical survey of the area.

Unlike most of the geographical features of the area, which were officially named in the twentieth century, Knights Hill was so called at least as early as 1720. It was presumably named after Governor James Knight who in 1717 established the first permanent Hudson's Bay Company fort at the mouth of the Churchill River, and who must have seen the hill many times during his trips between Fort York and Churchill. The first mention of Knights Hill in the journal for the Prince of Wales's Fort was on 7 June 1720, when men from the fort were prospecting for iron. There was rumour of red earth near Cape Churchill and men were being sent out first overland and then by boat to investigate. The first report reads '. . . they know not where the Earth lay, neither give any information of the same; being but within three miles of the place, & 20 miles from Knights Hill'.

On the 4th day of July, they made a further attempt, this time by boat, but it was hampered by ice. They did, however, shoot three geese but the journal does not make it clear whether these were Canada geese (grey geese) or snow geese (way-ways). It was not until the 10 August 1720 that the red earth was located. It must have been close to the coast on the beach ridges south of Cape Churchill and no more than 10 miles from the Cape. They spent eight days investigating and collecting and during that time shot several geese, ducks, and some 'small fowl'. On the evening of the 18 August they set off back.

'18th August in ye evening tide it came something more moderat, I put 2 of ye Ten gallon Kaggs & two of ye Quarter Casks into ye boat and wth all our things & wth hard rowing gott to ye Sandy point [Cape Churchill] wch is a place yt a boat may put a shoare at anytime a tide . . .

'19th The wind still at N.W. with a modarat gaile & clear weather this morning we gott forwards for ye factory. Rowing untill noon yt we gott ye lenght of Knights Hill; ye wind coming southorly beginning to blow very fresh wth gaile brought us to ye Rivers mought by 10 at night.'

Without careful searching through the journals it is not possible to say how widely visited this area was but there are two interesting notes on the 'red earth' in Andrew Graham's Observations on Hudson's Bay. In Book 2 of the Observations dated 1769, Graham reports that 'There is an iron mine at Cape Churchill about fifty miles from Churchill River. The ore lies on the surface of the earth.' In a later edition however, one originally attributed to Hutchins and dated c. 1772, he writes:

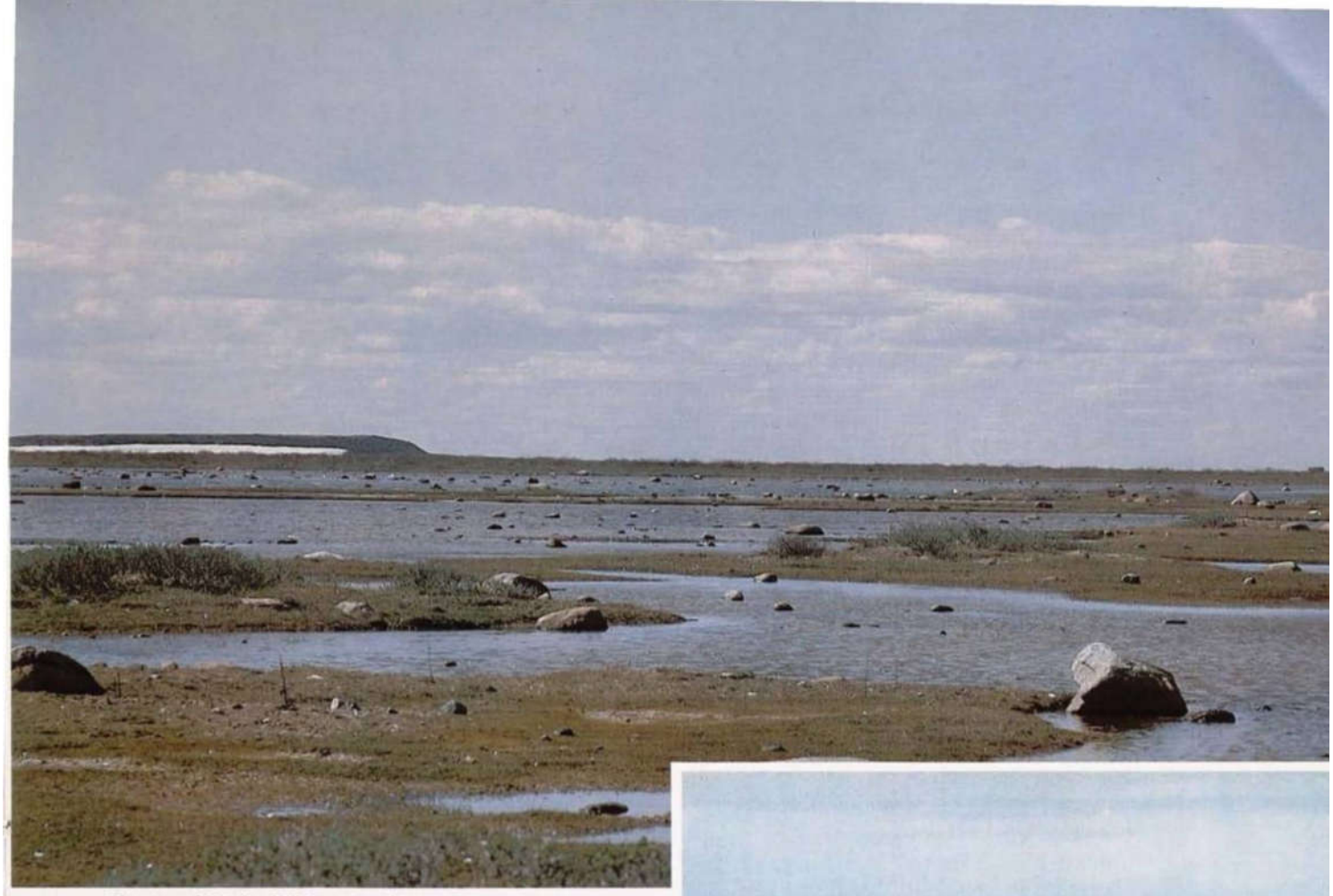
'At Cape Churchill several samples of a metallic substance were found on the surface of the earth which gave rise to an opinion there was an iron mine, but it proved only a semi mettal.'

Some time between 1769 and 1772 Graham must have learned of his error. Graham has one further comment on the minerals of the area, but it is impossible to pinpoint the location. It was detected when he and Humphrey Martin were carrying the packet between York and Prince of Wales. He writes:

'I am of the opinion there are some mineral springs as the water which runs out of the banks is of a yellowish red looking like train oil spilt upon water. In the month of January 1754 as I was travelling between Churchill and Fort York, I saw in the plains a spot about a foot in diameter where the water was a blood red, neither myself nor the People that were with me offered to drink of it, tho' very thirsty. It was not in the least frozen over.'

The overland packets between Fort York and Churchill were one of the major reasons for people traversing the Knights Hill-Cape Churchill area, though usually the track went well to the south of Knights Hill itself and hit the coast several miles south of Cape Churchill. An 1807 map in Peter Fidler's journal shows the usual route, and other travellers note that the track went south of Norton Lake through the spruce woods known as the Eastern Woods. These woods generally provided the first night's campsite out of Churchill. The Eastern Creeks, on present maps referred to as the Mast River and Wawao Creek (named recently), provided in the summer the most difficult walking conditions along the whole route. Reverend J. Lofthouse in his book *A Thousand Miles from a Post Office* describes a journey through the area in September 1893. He was travelling from York Fort to Churchill, but found himself north of the usual route.

'At Broad River we were shoulder-high in water for over an hour before we could get across, and a heavy storm of rain, hail, and snow overtook us as we were crossing Cape Churchill, one of the most desolate, dreary places in the whole world. For hours we wandered about in the "Eastern Creeks," and at last reached "Knights Hill Beacon" so exhausted that we



The view of Knights Hill from La Pérouse Bay.

The Tundra Biology Station from Knights Hill.

Pierre Mineau of the research station examines a snow goose from the delta flock.

lay on the open ground all night in spite of the downpour of rain.'

John West in his journal *The British North West American Indians with Free Thoughts on the Red River Settlement* describes a slightly more pleasant journey in 1820. He was also travelling north and on 18 July his party 'passed Cape Churchill and came to a tent of Chipewyan or Northern Indians. They received us as they commonly do strangers with great hospitality, and immediately cooked venison for our party, consisting now of eleven. These Indians joined us on our way to Churchill: and as the whole party moves along, with the old man ahead with a long staff in his hand followed by his 5 sons and a daughter and the rest of us in the train, it suggests to my mind the patriarchal mode of travelling.'

'July 19th The night has been so cold that I was obliged to sleep with my tent wrapped round me instead of pitching it. Our track has been very bad all morning through a wet swampy ground. Passed the Beacon [on Knights Hill] which created an association of ideas pleasing to my mind as wearied with todays walking. Two of our Indians left us this morning to take a circuit through some Islands [probably Fox Islands] by the sea to hunt for provisions.

'July 20th Might have reached the Factory today, but stopped for the hunters, they returned without much success, having only killed a few ducks, and a white fox, which they ate.'

The author who gives us most information about the area is George Simpson McTavish. In his book *Behind the Palisades* written in 1928 about his experiences in the Hudson Bay area from 1878 to 1889, he describes a fall visit through the area in 1883, departing from Churchill on the 26th of September.

'But the uncertainties of a precarious livelihood were demonstrated two days after we left Churchill. First of all, below Knightshill Beacon we saw a wigwam, and making for it in anticipation of a food supply, we found Mrs. Mayham, a Cree squaw, with a badly bitten arm, one of the Indian dogs having done the mischief. The men were away hunting, she had not much to eat, and nothing wherewith to attempt healing the festering bites, so we handed over our little supply of biscuit in toto, for the purpose of making poultices, and it is pleasing to remember that our hard tack, softened, worked salvation.

'About midday we stopped for lunch at the Eastern Creeks. The day was simply beautiful, a clear sunlit sky, not a cloud and we were congratulating ourselves on our good fortune. I shot a Jack fish in the creek, and we had this for a meal. . . . We could see the Eastern Woods in the distance, but where we were the ground with willow-fringed bushes, was cut up by creeks and sloughs. These sloughs and ponds extend all the way across Cape Churchill, and if one is not thoroughly acquainted with the route or maze, one

Early travellers through the Mast River Delta were often lost in the maze of sloughs and creeks.

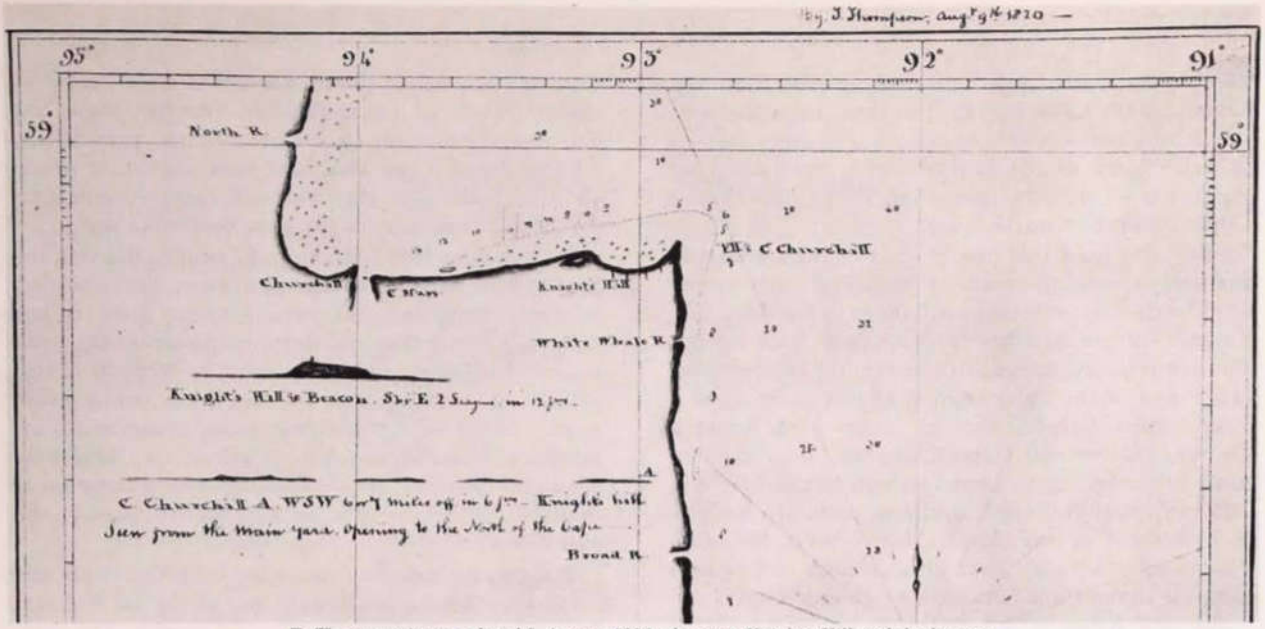
can readily wander all day and then find himself behind his starting point in the evening, or get lost, the depth of water in the sloughs prohibiting taking a straight course. The Cape crossing represents a peat bog as much as anything.'

McTavish also gives us an account of the sinking of the HBC supply boat *Cam Owen*, some 20 miles south of Cape Churchill in September 1886.

'On the 7th we got the surprise of our lives, when a small rowboat appeared, manned by Mr. Lovegrove, the first mate, and two sailors of the *Cam Owen*. They brought the unwelcome news that the *Cam Owen* was a wreck, on the south side of Cape Churchill. Luckily the crew and passengers had succeeded in landing, and were camped on shore in sail-made tents. An attempt had been made to send for aid by land, but the party had lost their way in the maze of small lagoons, stretching across the Cape to the Eastern Creeks, and were fortunate in getting back to their starting point.

'We learned that the *Cam Owen*, after buffeting bad weather had, owing to a sudden fall of wind, been forced to anchor in the Bight between Knightshill Beacon and the Cape. . . . In crossing the Cape the vessel struck, but he [Captain Hawes] got across to find that he had to trust again to his anchors, as the vessel was filling with water, and she might founder in deeper water. The smooth limestone formation of this part of the coast prevented the anchors from holding, and she was surged along the shore, till she found a final resting place some 15 to 20 miles to the South of the Cape.'

The rest of September was spent in rescuing crew and passengers, taking them to Fort York, and recovering the cargo. This incident shows the dangers of the shoals near Cape Churchill, a danger



T. Thompson's map dated 9 August 1820, showing Knights Hill and the beacon that was erected as a navigational aid along the shallow coast.

commented on by several early writers. Peter Fidler described his journey by canoe from Cumberland House via Churchill to York Factory in the journal entry of 22 August 1807:

'left the old factory, sailed E.N.E. 18 miles opposite Knights Hills & the Beacon we keeping about 2 miles from the high water mark many stony ridges running down to the sea & shoal at the low water 3 or 4 miles . . . also an island of Willows near Knights Hill E ½ S10 a gravelly island with a few willows on it about 200 yards long joining Cape Churchill, saw 5 White Bears upon it.'

Peter Fidler visited the area again in 1809 and leaves in his journal a most interesting map drawn by a Fort York Indian when Fidler passed the Owl River on 29 July 1809. Cape Churchill and Knights Hill and Fox Island are clearly shown. The river, known to later land travellers as one of the Eastern Creeks, and presently called the Mast (or Mistikokan) River, is referred to as the Egg River. This is the river in the delta where the snow geese currently nest in large numbers. Also shown are some Egg Islands near the mouth of the Broad River. One surprising feature of this map is that it fails to differentiate between the shoreline of Hudson Bay and the Churchill River. The coastline between Churchill and Fort York is also shown in a map by T. Thompson, on 9 August 1820. It is particularly interesting in that it shows a sketch of Knights Hill and its beacon as seen from the north-west two leagues away.

The beacon was clearly erected for the benefit of coastal navigation. Fidler's map is the first record that I have been able to find of it, but I have not searched through all the HBC journals from Prince of Wales's Fort. Older residents of Churchill remember the beacon but it stands no longer.

No history of the area would be complete without some attempt to document visits of native people. Numerous tent rings at Knights Hill and on its adjoining esker attest to their widespread use of the area, but since no archaeological investigation of the area has been attempted, I have to rely on written information and, for more recent visits, word-of-mouth reports. I would expect that in earlier days Knights Hill was an island prior to the isostatic uplift which is occurring throughout the region. A similar hill in the Twin Lakes area some 10 miles west-south-west of Knights Hill contains evidence of Pre-Dorset people.

Early in the nineteenth century we hear of the area being used for goose hunting to supply food for Prince of Wales's Fort. A good account of the annual activities there is given by Robert Harding in the journal from the fort for the year 1829. The Company sent out ammunition, salt, and casks to the various locations used by the migrant geese in the spring. The Indians then used to gather in these locations, shoot the geese, salt them down and pack them in the casks. At the end of the season the Indians left the casks buried to be collected at leisure by men from the fort when the ice had left Hudson Bay. Some sample entries from the journal illustrate this.

'16 Mar. 1829 Dunnet commenced repairing Goose Caskes some of which are intended to be sent to Knights Hill Point [now called Watson Point] with Amn, Salt etc.

'8 June 1829 . . . they left 16 casks of geese which are buried in sand at Knights Hill Point.

'9 July Late this evening Dunnet Oman, Moses, 3 Chipewyans and a Cree embarked for Knights Hill for the Salt Geese left last Spring. They are desired to unpack the 16 Casks of geese and bring them loose in the Boat leaving the empty casks at the point.'

From these and earlier quotations it is clear that Indians, both Cree and Chipewyans, used the area extensively not only in the spring but at other seasons as well. Some of the family names mentioned by McTavish — the Mayhams, the Dicks, the Omans —are still in the Churchill area.

Inuit also used the area at least in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries mainly in early spring when seals were numerous off-shore in the Cape and Knights Hill area. Father Ducharme, an Oblate priest who spent many years at Eskimo Point, informed me that many of the older Inuit spoke of camping at a place called Sarpik, located somewhere between Churchill River and Cape Churchill. They used to come in the spring to hunt seal and the seal fat was sold in Churchill. Sarpik is almost certainly Knights Hill. Several of the Royal North West Mounted Police reports from Churchill also refer to Eskimos camping in the Cape Churchill neighbourhood.

For completeness, a little of the recent history of the area needs to be recorded. Biologists and geologists visited the area: Tyrrell in 1892, Preble in 1902, Twomey in 1932 and 1933, Nelson in 1951. In the 1930s there were at least two trappers' cabins in the region, according to the older residents of Churchill. After the war and even up to the present, the area has been used extensively by the armed forces for manoeuvres and many unsightly scars on the tundra are a result of these activities. At present there are four buildings set up and used by biologists in the summer time and by trappers in the winter months.

To return to the original question of snow goose history: has any evidence been uncovered for or against the view that the La Pérouse Bay snow goose colony is a recent one? Unfortunately the evidence remains inconclusive. The authoritative early naturalists Graham and Hearne did not know of nesting snow geese anywhere. Graham states, 'After about three weeks stay they journey on to the Northward where they breed, but in what part is unknown. It is the opinion of most of the gentlemen in this service that they resort to that vast tract of land hitherto undiscovered to the Northwest.'

Samuel Hearne in his book *A Journey from Prince of Wales Fort in Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean* writes, 'The general breeding-place of this bird is not known to any Indian in Hudson's Bay, not even to the Esquimaux who frequent the remotest North.'

In the eighteenth century there is no knowledge of breeding snow geese at La Pérouse Bay or anywhere else. It has been assumed that if snow geese nested so close to Prince of Wales's Fort these naturalists would certainly know about it. This is probably correct although, as one can see from the historical reports, La Pérouse Bay was an area difficult of access both from land, where the trail went well to the south, and from the sea where shoals prevented close access by water. None of the published records show any European visitation to the area of the present-day colony. Even if the area had been visited, it would only be from late May through early August that evidence of breeding might have been obtained.

It is obvious that Indians and Eskimos did visit the area at least in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Whether they knew of nesting snow geese is less certain. Clearly they did not communicate any such information to any of the authors referred to in this article. McTavish writes that he never saw a goose egg or heard of a goose nest being found in all his northern experiences. Eric Carlson, a long-time Churchill resident, recalls finding nesting snow geese in 1934, just to the west of Knights Hill (not to the east where the present colony lies).

It seems on balance that, apart from the 1930s, the evidence for long continuous use of the La Pérouse Bay as a nesting colony is non-existent. The only tantalizing suggestion that such a conclusion may not be justified is the Fidler map with the river running into La Pérouse Bay and the Chipewyan name for Knights Hill as Egg Hill. Are these old names which indicated that there was a good place to collect eggs? If so, could these have been snow geese eggs? The present name for the Egg River is the Mast or Mistikokan River. Mistikokan is Cree for a beacon and so both names probably refer to the beacon erected on Knights Hill, and as such indicate that name was applied subsequent to the founding of Churchill. The other name applied to the river and adjacent creeks was Eastern Creeks, presumably a post-contact name also. It seems likely that Egg River was indeed the original native name, translated perhaps for Fidler's benefit. Also on Fidler's map the low-lying islands off the mouth of Broad River are referred to as Egg Islands.

Egg River and Egg Islands were probably favoured places for the collection of eggs for food, but even so are hardly evidence for nesting snow geese. The Egg Islands are presently unsuitable for nesting geese and seem much more suitable for eider ducks and Arctic terns. The Egg [Mast] River has not only snow geese nesting at the present time but also large numbers of eider ducks and Arctic terns. Reverend Lofthouse reports on the predilection of Indians for partly-incubated eider eggs when he made a trip with them to the Tha-anne River in 1896. It seems then that there is no reason to believe that the term Egg River is indicative of an ancient snow goose colony, but rather that nesting colonial birds such as eiders and terns occur abundantly there. The balance of evidence at the present time is in favour of a recent origin for the La Pérouse Bay snow goose colony, although the origin is unlikely to have been so precipitate as was earlier believed. ◆

By Jill Warren and David M. Smith

An artist's view of Quebec

'La Vache Rouge'. Oil, 8" x 10". Near Hull, Quebec. 1955.

Dr Warren is art reviewer for the 'New Mexican' of Santa Fe. Dr Smith is an art collector, and scientist in cancer research at the Los Alamos national laboratory.

Courtesy of the Harrison Galleries

'Isle d'Orleans'. Oil, 10" x 20". 1979.

WHEN, AT 25, ROBERT LOUGHEED went from Ontario to study painting in New York with Frank Vincent DuMond at the Art Students' League, he did not yet suspect he had the makings of a great painter, though he had been sketching with the zeal of a born artist for 15 years. City life was not new to the youth (he had taken a job as a commercial artist for the *Toronto Star* at age 19) but painting was. DuMond opened the world of magic made with brushes and pigments, and Lougheed was filled with it when the time came for vacation. His way home from Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, where he had been painting landscapes out-of-doors with DuMond, took him for the first time through Quebec, and there he lingered, honouring on canvas the scenes that were delighting his eyes.

Lougheed recalls today, 'When I first went to Quebec in 1935, people were still using oxen and heavy horses for all their farm work. It carried me back to my childhood in Grand Valley, Ontario, and helped me understand what life in Canada must have been like a hundred years before. Wonderfully, time had stopped still there.'

Since that first trip, Bob Lougheed has painted in all seasons all over Quebec: on Isle-d'Orleans, in the Laurentians, in the Rideau region, in Baie St Paul, and near Lachute, St Jovite, and Valleyfield. And, he says, 'Quebec is one of the beauty spots of Canada for any painter.' Isle d'Orleans, accessible only by ferry from Quebec City, he found to be a world all its own, where the people carded wool and wove cloth by hand, still maintaining the old ways. This island recalled, for Lougheed, the work of Canadian painter Horatio Walker (1858-1938) who had recorded its history on canvas for years.

Lougheed also loved painting the Laurentians, with their log houses, barns, abundance of cattle and sheep, all nestled among the hills. He especially enjoyed the early spring when the ground was still

Robert Lougheed, a contemporary photograph taken at Santa Fe, New Mexico.

covered with snow, and the air tingled with harness bells on the teams pulling farm folk in home-made sleighs and cutters to town for commerce and companionship.

Around Lachute Lougheed experienced some of the most bone-chilling weather he has ever painted in. He loves painting outdoors so much that even temperatures of thirty below zero Celsius did not keep him inside. From DuMond he had learned that he could keep his paints workable in such extreme cold by mixing in poppy oil, but adding the poppy oil lengthens drying time to two months, when normal oil paint dries in two to three days. Lougheed had gone to Lachute planning to paint the Kerr family's Clydesdale logging team, for horses have always been one of Lougheed's favourite subjects. However, the practical Mr Kerr would not bring the team out of the barn to pose for the artist until 'it warmed up' to twenty-five below, Celsius.

Once, in the Rideau region near Hull, Quebec, Lougheed was painting a charming farm and the beautiful black cow that lived there. Lougheed spoke only English. The farmer, who spoke only French, came out to examine the artist's work and suddenly exclaimed, 'La vache rouge — la vache rouge!' The

'The Ice Harvest'. Oil, 20" x 26".
Lake St Francis, Valleyfield, P.Q. 1944.

'The Quebec Team'. Oil, 21" x 26".
Baie St Paul, P.Q. 1948.

Courtesy of the Harrison Galleries

'Winter Reflections'. Oil, 12"x16". Along the St Lawrence River. 1949.

'My Valleyfield Farm Friends'. Oil, 28"x36". Valleyfield, P.Q. 1944.

'Beyond St Jovite'. Oil, 8"x10". St Jovite, P.Q. 1955.

picture had communicated something the two men were not able to say to each other — that the cow's exposure to the summer sun had bleached her back red. With the help of the artist's eye, the farmer had truly seen his cow's colour for the first time, and the painting became a universal means of expression.

Perhaps more than any other living painter, Lougheed works on location, and he has developed the quick assurance he needs to paint in the open air. When young artists ask him for advice, he tells them, 'Never fake a subject. Go directly to the source and consult life.' That is one of the reasons why he loved to paint in Quebec.

'There an artist doesn't have to invent *anything*. The charm and the subjects that go into a painting are all present. The old barns have lines that move in the rhythm of the landscape, the rugged stone buildings, the villages — Oh, the villages! The road winds past the little slanted-roofed houses and up towards the church on the hill. It's very different from any other part of Canada.'

After finishing his formal training, Bob joined the Canadian Army. Upon mustering out, he worked as a commercial artist and illustrated for most of the major magazines, always careful to reserve six months of every year for painting trips. Eventually he stopped illustrating to devote all his time to fine arts painting. He has painted all over Canada, in Alaska above the Arctic Circle, in the United States and Mexico, in the Virgin Islands, and recently, in France. He settled for a time in Westport, Connecticut, and moved to Santa Fe, New Mexico, with his wife Cordy, in 1970. One of the foremost living painters of landscapes and animals, Lougheed has won a number of awards, including five gold and four silver medals at National Academy of Western Art exhibitions; the Colt Award (artists' choice for the best group of paintings at the show), six gold and four silver medals at the Cowboy Artists of America Exhibitions; and the Franklin Mint gold medal. His paintings have been displayed in most major cities, and he has been asked to hang his work in several shows, including Royal Canadian Academy Exhibits throughout Canada; the International Animals in Art Show at the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, 1975; and a one-man show sponsored by the Governor of New Mexico in the Governor's Gallery at the Capitol Building this past spring.

Throughout his rich career, Lougheed has maintained a special place in his heart for Quebec, the location of his first solo painting trip and the inspiration for many subsequent trips and hundreds of paintings.

Robert Lougheed's paintings may be viewed in Canada at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts; the Glenbow-Alberta Institute, Calgary; and the Harrison Galleries, Vancouver. ◆

Legends of the Northern Cree

By George W. Bauer

Mr Bauer taught for several years at Fort George on the east coast of James Bay. He now lives in Crystal Falls, Michigan.

Photographs are by the author.

A cold, still northern night; a good time for story-telling inside the wigwam.

Narrator Isaac Chiskamish.

TO SEPARATE THE FOLK narratives of the Northern Cree from the surroundings in which they are told and from those who tell them is to rob them of lasting meaning. During the 1960s when I lived as a teacher among the Cree of Fort George (now Port Nouveau-Québec) I recorded many traditional stories with the assistance of two translators, Josie Sam Atchison and Chief Robert Kanatewat.

The first of the two narratives recorded here is one that I heard while staying with the Angus Sam family in their early-spring, goose-hunting camp. The tale is typical and portrays, with self-effacing honesty, the remarkable endurance of the Northern Cree.

The Sams lived along the James Bay coast about forty miles south of Fort George. In winter their canvas-covered wigwam was pitched in a protective curtain of snow-laden spruce trees. The lower outside walls of the wigwam were banked with snow, while inside a thick, absorbent belt of sphagnum moss was held in place by a second or inner wall to provide greater warmth for its occupants. A small creek, frozen to its gravel bed, passed before the encampment, providing ice chips by the bucketful for water. Surly sled dogs were staked among the trees, and a meat cache stood at the back. As yet there was little meat, for the first geese of the season had not arrived.

Once inside, that evening we sat upon thick, freshly

Angus Sam's goose-hunting camp some forty miles south of Fort George, Quebec. In the foreground are unfinished goose decoys.

cut spruce boughs, devouring ptarmigans stewed in their own juices. Pieces of meat were torn from the bones, dipped in gravy and eaten with hot bannock toasted on sticks over the small, sheet-metal camp stove. This was simple fare, but when it was eaten with sweet, hot tea, after a blustering day in a goose blind, a man could ask for little more.

Darkness had by now overtaken our sheltered world and everyone — men, women and children, numbering eight in all — settled back upon blankets, patchwork quilts, and sleeping bags, sinking into sated contentment. The only lights were the flicker of a candle sitting upon a block of wood and the glow from the stove which filled the darkened cavity at the centre of the shelter. I shall never forget the human warmth and comfort of those nights. Sleep always came easily, but before that, we heard a story. The old man, Isaac Chiskamish, stirred himself and spoke.

'Numuniskis, eh? — No geese, eh?' he asked of no one in particular. *'Akose aka. Meyo geeshekau wayu sheshe.* — Well, no matter. This was a day meant only for ducks!'

Everyone laughed at the old man's joke. Encouraged, he went on, telling of a time not long ago when there was nothing to eat. He told of a man, woman, and child who had been pressed to the limits of human endurance. Warming to our attention, the old man brushed sweat from his face with swollen, arthritic fingers.

For many days about this time of year, this man I tell you of could not find anything to eat. The man and his family were very hungry. He hunted high and low, and, at times, the family moved their wigwam as far as they could, hoping for better fortune elsewhere. Several days went by in this way and because the weather was bad, nothing flew, nor did he find anything in the bush. Not so much as a rabbit moved.

One morning, soon after they had awakened, the man said to his wife, 'We should move on again while we still have strength. We will travel to the coast; it is not far and now is the time for the first geese to arrive.'

After breaking camp, the man travelled painfully ahead on snowshoes, looking for whatever wildlife he could find, while his wife followed, pulling their child and the few things they had upon the toboggan. ('It was not that this man was lazy,' the old man explained for my benefit. 'His wife pulled the toboggan so that he would be free to give chase to any game he might come upon. Cree women are not that badly put upon!')

This man walked on a few miles through the deep snow, stumbling as he went, and then

collapsed. He clawed at the branches and trees to help himself stand, but try as he might, he could not get to his feet. He soon realized that his struggles were in vain and drained away what little strength he had, and so, resigned, he lay waiting. His wife would not be long in coming.

The man was numb with cold and exhaustion when his wife came upon him. She struggled to pull him to the toboggan and went gamely on. The way was more difficult than it has been because she no longer had her husband's broken trail to walk over. A long time passed — who is to say how long under these circumstances? As they neared the coast, she stopped and listened. Hardly daring to believe her ears, she began to cry. The man did not understand and asked 'Why is it you cry? Is it because the way is difficult?'

'No. No,' she answered. 'I cry because I hear geese and we will not be able to kill them because you are unable to walk.'

'But wait, my wife,' he said. 'I will call upon Mitaweetun, my guardian-spirit, one last time.'

Solemnly, with all the earnestness he could muster from his withered body, the man rose and said slowly 'Mitaweetun, do not forsake us. We are in mortal need.'

Mitaweetun came as wings upon the wind, and together the hunter and his guardian spirit framed nets with long, slender spruce poles to catch the geese. Sprinkling sand and gravel beneath the nets at the edge of a nearby pond, they called the geese to them and it was not long before they had more flesh than they could devour in several sittings.

These people had been spared but not everyone was as fortunate as they had been, nor did everyone have a 'Mitaweetun' to call upon. In times past, many died of starvation.

I know this story to be true because this man and woman were mother and father to me, and I — not to be pitied — was the child. This happened not far from where we camp at this very moment.

Young boys, relaxed on spruce boughs and blankets in the spring goose-hunting camp, look forward to the evening's story.

Like most Indians across the face of North America, the Cree of James Bay have always separated their narratives into two kinds: the *atikuan* and the *tipachiman*. The *tipachiman* is thought to be as 'news' — current or relatively current events of note. Outstanding feats of any kind — be they by a hunter, shaman, or housewife — would fall into this category. Credibility is of primary importance. The introductory remark, 'This is a true thing that I tell', usually distinguishes this story. The first narrative of Mitaweetun is of this kind.

The *atikuan* is older than memory and is told in a traditional form and style that, ideally, should never vary or change to suit the whims of the individual story-teller. These narratives are considered sacred and have been learned word by word, passing from father to son over the flame and smoke of many a camp fire. The following narrative 'The Story of Geeushowash' is called an *atikuan*.

I heard it from the Cree patriarch, George Head, one night in late February as he sat in our government apartment at George River. He explained to the churning tape recorder: 'These stories are told the same way the stories are told in the Bible. What I mean is they are parables — really false stories but with a true meaning. I guess this is the only way the old timers could make the younger generation understand how they should live and how they should hunt and how they can tell what is wrong and bad, and what is right and good. In the old days there was no other teaching, you see, and there were no schools, so this was the only way they could teach the young. These stories are important, you know.'

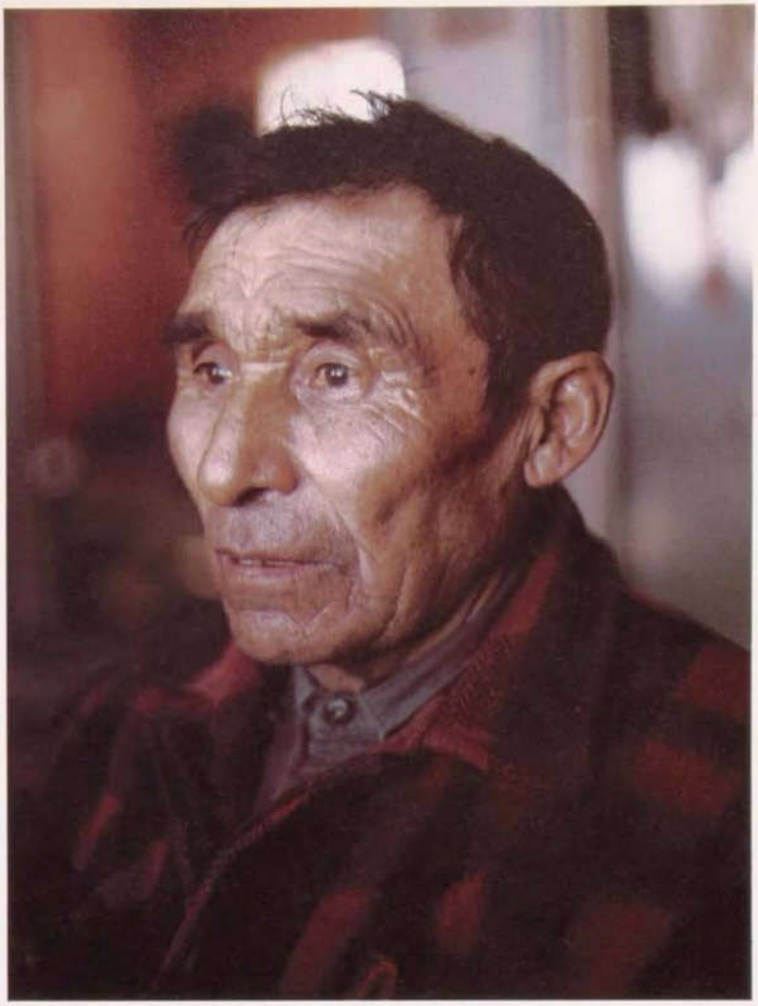
George thought for a moment and corrected himself. 'These stories *were* important. They no longer are as important as they once were. The stories haven't changed. They mean the same to those of us who still know them, but the times have changed. Life is not the same today as it was when I was young or when my father was in his prime.'

He looked directly at me, a government teacher, before continuing. 'Today we got a school full of teachers to tell the younger generation what they got to know to get on in life, and they got a preacher to

tell them what they got to believe. It doesn't leave much for us. These stories are told now more to entertain than the way it used to be.'

The narratives were to the old Cree story-teller what the biblical stories are to the Christian. As Bible stories live in Christian ritual and morality, so do the traditional narratives survive in the lives of the aged nomadic hunters of the Eastern subarctic. As in all literature, oral or written, the stories reflect the way of life of the teller — in this case the harsh and sometimes violent struggle to survive in the northern bush. The bush is home and it may well be that one of the supreme joys of these people is surviving in spite of the hazards that confront them from day to day. They also speak of the power of the unseen world — or 'medicine', as some would have it. With this power a man is master of his fate and much of the natural and supernatural world. With this power a man survives, finds game, overcomes illness, sees into the future, protects his family and his friends. With power, he is safe. Because of this, the shaman was especially important until the recent past. Each family unit had a shaman who communicated, on behalf of those for whom he spoke, with the unseen world through dreams, visions, and the shaking tent. True, the shaman may also have been a practitioner of 'black magic' and a caster of spells, but more often he was the vital link between man and animal, invoking and joining the spirits of the two.

The earlier importance of supernatural power is demonstrated in the next narrative, the story of Geeushowash. The story was told by George Head, a large man with the hatchet features of unmixed blood — a face dominated by an aggressive Roman nose and deep-set eyes. He sat as though a ramrod supported his spine, and walked with the flat-footed determination of a man long accustomed to bearing heavy loads over the roughest wilderness trails. Though he spoke no English, he shared with me his world through the snail-like locutions of translation. This man, more than any other, helped me to better understand his people. 'Ask anything you would like to know,' he promised, 'and I will do my best to answer.' He told me this parable, among others, from the oral history of his people.



George Head, who told the parable of Geeushowash.

Long before the first white man came to the forested land of the Crees there lived a boy named Geeushowash. The boy lived with his paternal grandmother and travelled the year round with a roving band of hunters and fishers, who took their living from the forests and streams. Geeushowash was poor and his people treated him with much unkindness. When the story begins Geeushowash was at an age when he could hunt nothing larger than rabbits.

One summer day as he walked along a river bank, he came upon a number of women from his encampment gathering nets full of fish. The boy stopped.

'Could I have some of your fish?' he asked. 'I have no nets with which to fish and my grandmother and I are hungry.'

'No,' the woman said scornfully. 'We will not feed you. Fend for yourself.'

The refusal of food to those in need was a violation of an age-old custom. Impatient with the many unkindnesses he had suffered, Geeushowash decided it was time to punish these people.

'I'll fix you,' he called.

'Hah!' one of the women replied. 'What can you do? You can't hunt and you can't make fish nets.'

'Yes,' the women called in chorus. 'What can you do, you worthless thing?'

The boy left the women. In the days that followed, a cloud darkened all the land and winds whipped the skins of the wigwams. The

people remained inside for days on end, not daring to go out. They grew restless with passing time and many went hungry as their food disappeared.

Upon awakening early one morning, a wise old man listened intently to the skins flapping wildly against the wigwam poles. Surely, he thought, these winds breathe of ill-omen. Something was dreadfully wrong.

'What is it?' someone asked.

'I fear a tribal law has been broken,' the old man replied, 'and we are being justly punished.'

'It is the wretched orphan boy,' said another — a woman lying near the entrance of the wigwam. 'It is he who has willed this upon us. He and no other.'

'How can it be the orphan boy?' asked the old man. 'What has he done?'

'Many days ago,' the first woman explained, 'the boy asked us for some of our fish because he and his grandmother had no food. We refused and sent him packing.'

'Aiyea,' the old man said. 'Tell me more.'

'Yes,' said a third woman. 'The boy then threatened us. He said he would punish us.'

'I see,' said the old man. 'That is how it is, then. It is the boy's will that we suffer.'

'Nonsense,' repeated the second woman. 'He is only a worthless orphan.'

'Don't speak foolishly,' commanded the old man. 'We are in difficulty enough. We must send the men to build a conjuring tent.'

'How do we build anything in these winds?' one of the men asked.

'Never mind,' the old man answered. 'Just do as I say.'

Poles were cut and trimmed. Holes were dug in the earth, the poles were set in place with the old man's supervision, and large pieces of scraped caribou skins were secured with willow hoops. Once the conjuring tent was complete, it looked much like a cylinder and was so sturdy that several of the strongest men could not budge it.

'Now, fetch the boy, Geeushowash,' the old man said.

The orphan boy came quickly. Ignoring the others he went straight to the old man.

'Did you want me?' the boy asked.

The old man looked at the boy with troubled eyes. 'Geeushowash, we ask your forebearance', he said. 'I am told that some of our women have made a dreadful mistake by denying you food when you were in need. Now you punish us, as well you might. But, I ask, forgive us. The conjuring tent we built is for you. Bring an end to the winds and the ill-will you hold for us in your heart. Do this, Geeushowash, and we will forever hold you in our esteem.'

'Very well,' the boy said. 'I will do what you ask but only if the people promise never again to shame me or break any of the tribal laws.'

'You have my word,' the old man said.

'There is one more thing that they must do before I go inside the tent tonight,' said Geeushowash. 'They must gather up every container they can lay their hands on and turn them right side up. Even the canoes must be turned up,' the boy said.

Turning to the people, the old man ordered, 'You have heard the boy. Do as he says.'

As it darkened that night, everyone gathered around the conjuring tent, waiting for Geeushowash. When he arrived, he went straight to the tent, lifted the flap of scraped hide and ducked inside. Kneeling in the center of the small cylinder, he began to sing and as he did the tent began to rattle and shake with terrifying force, confounding the men who had tested its sturdiness. The tent continued to rattle and shake and, as it did the winds became still, the sky cleared and the starlit heavens showed above. The moon broke through its thick cloud cover, lighting the uplifted faces of those below.

'Ahhh,' they said. 'Geeushowash does have great power. Yes, indeed he does.'

It was then that the people heard many noises that sounded like pieces of freshly butchered meat falling to the earth with soft, fleshy noises. The old man spoke sternly. 'Do not look into the containers. It is forbidden. We must wait.'

The noises and the shaking of the conjuring tent suddenly stopped. The boy stepped out into the moonlight with an expression of stress. 'Someone has looked into the containers,' he said.

'Will you never learn?' the old man asked the people. 'You were told not to look into the containers and yet you did. Why?'

'I was curious,' a young woman confessed.

'Curious!' the old man snorted. 'Go to the containers and there you will find fresh meat. Had you waited, there would have been more. Feast! Stuff yourselves. But never forget you are forever beholden to this boy.'

There can be no doubt about the importance of such legends in the lives of the old Northern Cree. They were the cornerstone of their world, bringing order to their lives and the seeming chaos that surrounded them. The children learned from their teachings and the adults profited from their wisdom. Though these narratives are foreign to our time and experience it would be an injustice to dismiss them as suitable for nothing more than tales for children. ◆

James Lothian, 1885.

William Lothian, 1910.

Lost on Prairie Trails

By E. Norah Reynolds

IN THE SUMMER OF 1880 James and William Lothian, sons of a tenant farmer in East Lothian, Scotland, boarded the S. S. *Buenos Ayrean* at Glasgow to sail to Quebec City. Their plan was to establish homesteads in Manitoba and to bring out their Scottish sweethearts.

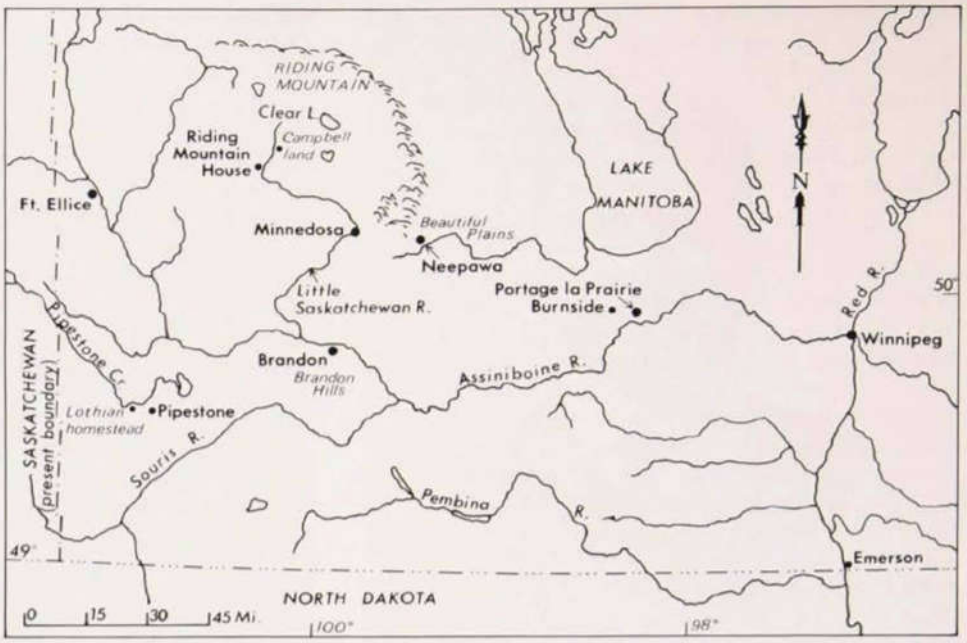
On board ship for the two-week voyage was young Glenlyon Campbell, son of Chief Factor Robert Campbell of the Hudson's Bay Company, explorer of the Yukon. Glenlyon, then 16 years of age, was determined to become a farmer, and he was travelling to join his father on two parcels of land that the retired chief factor had purchased near Riding Mountain in Manitoba.

E. Norah Reynolds, of Toronto, is an Honours graduate in history and English from the University of Winnipeg. She is a descendant of James Lothian, and is editing the letters and diaries of James and William Lothian, 1880-1900, for publication.

During the voyage the three young men became close friends. Glenlyon knew that in order to secure the land chosen by his father, certain improvements had to be made on it and it had to be lived on for a specified time each year. Since he had to return to Edinburgh in the fall to finish his education, Glenlyon could not meet the requirements. Through friendship with the Lothian boys he believed he might solve his problem. He urged them to go to the Campbell land at Riding Mountain and spend the fall and winter there and do the spring planting. However the Lothian brothers were eager to see as much of the new country as possible before making any commitments.

When the S. S. *Buenos Ayrean* docked at Quebec City on 7 July 1880, the Lothians made their way by train to Sarnia, by ship to Duluth and by train to Winnipeg. From there, in August, they set out to walk to Portage la Prairie, a two-day journey, in order to see the country for themselves. Money was short. It had cost them more to travel from Quebec

The Lothian brothers travelled and worked at various points in Manitoba after their arrival from Scotland in 1880, eventually settling in the Pipestone Valley.



City to Winnipeg than it had cost them to cross the ocean. So they took work on the farm of Kenneth McKenzie at Burnside near Portage la Prairie. In the late fall William went north-west to the Beautiful Plains area near Neepawa to help with the harvest on other McKenzie land. They worked until late November and were paid $20 per month each with board. The practice in Canada was to hire farm labour for a short season only. This differed from the Scottish practice of year-round employment for the 'hinds', and the brothers realized that they must find work and shelter for the winter.

It was at this point that the urging of Glenlyon came into force. They made arrangements with Robert Campbell, who was presumably still at Riding Mountain, although his son had returned to school, and set out for the 'ranch' in the north. The following extracts are from their letters written to their family about this adventurous winter: the journey in December 1880 to Riding Mountain, work in a logging camp and the beginning of their serious search for good farmland.

'I am happy to say both Jim and I are very well. ... The winter as yet has not been rough but cold is no mistake. ...

'My nose is the only part of my anatomy which has exhibited a tendency to freeze. You know I can boast, and not without sufficient reason, of being honoured with a good noble-sized proboscis, but in Manitoba it becomes a question whether such a possession is an advantage. In summer it offers extensive domain for the relentless mosquitoes to work upon and when winter, with its biting breath, reigns supreme then my poor nose becomes a victim to Jack Frost. So that, to sum things up, you will see that a big nose is no to be envied.

'My first experience of frost bite was the morning we left William Bertram's [a friend they visited near Brandon]. Coming around the Brandon Hills the wind blew "snell". With the temperature eleven below I felt my nose fearful cold as if it was going to be nipped off my face altogether, and shutting my right eye I gave a squint down and saw, sure enough, a pure white spot. Jim assured me it was a frost bite. I immediately began to rub and soon it restored to normal colour. You may imagine the number of squints my nose got that day. I had a scarf round my neck and kept it in front of my face at all times, but your breath freezes and very soon round your nose and mouth is nothing but a coat of ice, which is very uncomfortable. Your whiskers get frozen to the scarf and Jim had an unpleasant time with his that morning.

'But though frosty it is really splendid weather. No rain for about two months and only about three inches of snow. If it wasn't quite so severe a cold, it really has the old country winter beat. No muddy boots, wet feet, no slush and sleet one day and rain the next — just a steady frost and clear skies day after day and night after night until the ground is locked hard and the ponds and rivers are solid ice. Ice at present is all of twenty inches thick and three months of frost still to run and yet they tell us this is a mild winter too. The Indians had predicted such this season, saying how the ducks and geese were long in leaving for their southern migration, and that the

muskrats were building their houses near the edges of the lakes and rivers. . . . Yesterday and today have been real fresh and no frost whatever. Mr. Armit, the manager of the Company's place here [Riding Mountain Post], says it is the wonders of this North West country and these mild breezes are called a "Chinook". . . . So much for the weather, and now I will give you our journey up here, which was full of perils enough as you shall hear.

'To the inexperienced travelling alone on the prairies, it is difficult. There are so many trails going in any and every direction. It is next to impossible to keep on the right one. So it seemed to us at any rate and the snow partially covering the trails made it hard to tell which was the most beaten and likely to be the one to follow. In summer one may get lost without being much inconvenienced. If alone he can lie down at night without peril of cold — the only trouble being the usual mosquitoes. If he has cattle he can let them loose to graze until early morning sets him on his way again, but at this time of year to stand still is to freeze. Before beginning to tell you of our journey it may be as well to give you our reasons for coming so far up here — about 200 miles north-west of Winnipeg.

'On our way out to Quebec, we got intimately acquainted on the voyage with a young fellow — Glenlyon Campbell by name. His father is an old retired Hudson's Bay officer. He has got two sections of land up here and Glenlyon is anxious to farm it, but has gone back and is to take it over in three years. He begged his father to ask us fellows to go up and do some work on the land. He said there was lots of work up here and we'd lose nothing in coming. There is also a good supply of hay for our oxen. We did not relish the idea of going on the railways as there are such a rough lot of men to be in daily contact with, so after mature consideration we decided to come here for the winter.

'Our trunks we left at the Immigration House in Winnipeg. Jim wrote to the agent, Mr. Hespeler, to send them up [to Portage la Prairie] by boat, but they didn't arrive so Jim had to go down for them — no such hard task now as the railway is into Portage la Prairie and one can go to Winnipeg in five hours, a trip which took two days just five months ago. That was on the 22nd of November. He found our trunks all safe as we had left them and got them up by train. Mr. Campbell had left his pony [at Burnside] and an old Red River cart was placed at Jim's service with which he was able to bring up our necessaries. He brought up also many useful articles and plenty of books for winter reading. You may be sure I was glad to doff my summer clothes for warm winter ones. When I came up to the Beautiful Plains I only brought two shirts, a pair of trousers and a coat, so I had little to come and go on. When Jim came I had a good bath and put on a woollen shirt, a pair of woollen drawers and a pair of trousers, then a pair of duck pants and I felt "Boss, you bet your life" as they say here. When well protected one doesn't feel the cold and it is quite pleasant in fact.

'Jim left Burnside on the last day of the month (November) and got up to the Beautiful Plains on the day following; sixty miles and he walked every foot and was pretty well knocked up. The night he arrived, which was about nine o'clock, the pony's back had got hurt and was swelled, so we thought if we could hitch up Pete and Harry it would be better. I must tell you what kind of rig a Red River cart is. The main feature is that they are made entirely of wood. They are generally drawn by a pony or an ox and have two shafts. Jim, therefore, set to fix on a single pole and hitched up the two oxen, turning the cart backside foremost and ludicrous it was to see the shafts or trams bringing up the rear.

'Having got everything in readiness we prepared to start the following morning, Thursday. We got up early and gave the oxen a feed of hay and just as infant morn was bathing the East in crimson light, we started on our seventy-mile trip. It was a sharp frost and the wheels made a merry noise in the crisp snow. Our first stage was Minnedosa, or Prairie City, its Indian name meaning fast water, as the river runs rapidly there. The distance, 28 miles, is a long journey for a short day and oxen do not cover the ground as horses do. We jogged along, Jim doing most of the driving — his first experience with a yoke of oxen. About twelve miles we rested for dinner by the side of a large pond. I took my axe and away to cut a hole for water. It took some chopping, the ice being 18 inches thick. After giving our oxen a drink, we lit a fire, got out our pan and thawed out our bannocks which were like ice. Our humble repast being over we started on our way again. The country all unsettled, broken by ponds and stony, though I believe, good soil. These pond holes are going to be a great drawback to the country — fine tracts of land so often broken into by them; the country being so flat, it might be quite a problem to drain them out. One or two of these ponds would be useful on a place, but 20 or 30 spoil it; then the stones are not small ones, but larger boulder stones, brought here in ancient days by icebergs and deposited at the bottom of the lake.

'The day, which had promised fine, now clouded up and snow commenced to fall and, though scanty, was sufficient to give us fears of being abroad in this unknown land in a snowstorm. Jim kept the oxen going as well as he could, while I behind, brought up the rear. My feet got very sore and sometimes I jumped on the pony's back, but it was too cold to remain there long. Through, among the ponds and poplar bluffs, we threaded our weary way and still the snow came down. Jim, who had been this way before

on his way to the Big Bend, told of a finger post which pointed the way to "Hare's Crossing". We now passed a settler's place. I don't know what would induce anyone to settle in such a place. I am sure they couldn't get a five-acre field for holes, but knowing absolutely nothing of land, people who are shoemakers, carpenters, tailors even, take up land.

'On the leeside of a bluff we came on three Indian wigwams and on passing an Indian came out, followed by a dog and three or four small children. Motioning the papooses to keep back, he gave us a wave and I stepped up. He came up to me and pointing back over the road we had come he said the one word "Sandy". Of course I did not know what he meant and told him so and as little he understood me. "Sandy" he repeated. "Sandy?" says I and he answered "ha" meaning "Yes". I again assured him that I didn't understand him but never a smile played over his dark visage and as I looked upon his tall figure and sad look (for the real Indian carries in his face the interpretation of his fate), I could not but pity the wild man whose home was being taken from him and his hunting grounds being transformed into waving fields of golden grain. As I turned from him, he went off and I heard him giving vent to a disgusted grunt at my stupidity. Jim, who had been insisting that the finger post was not far ahead, must have forgotten the road, I fear, for not until the shades of night were upon us did we behold it in the distance.

'To Minnedosa it was six miles and to Keg's, a stopping place on the way to Hare's Crossing, was three. So the question was, which way should we take? The better marked road to Minnedosa decided us to go that way. A dreary six miles it was, through the rough unbroken country, night closing in and the snow falling and my muffler frozen round my face to boot. In the twilight, we marked running along the side of a pond a beast of some description. It was making for the trail in front of us and on coming nearer we saw it was a prairie wolf. It seemed not in the least afraid and stopping not eighty yards from us, gazed on us as much as to say, "I'd like to feast on you." Alone it was not bold enough to try, so turning tail it trotted slowly in front for a few yards and then disappeared. Going quite a distance we came to a light on our left and Jim went up to ask how far we were from our destination. On again we plodded until at last, Oh! goodly sight, there appeared the lights of Minnedosa — first two or three, then others became visible till at last we reached them. "Prairie City" — one would think by such a name there would be some great infant place here. Well, so there is, I believe, but you should have seen it that night as we reached it —a house standing here and there looking, with their wooden sides, like ghost houses as if they might vanish if one attempted to enter the door and make them realities. Realities they were and I quickly made my way to one of them. On opening the door there was sitting comfortably round a stove a lot of men, travellers most of them, like ourselves, but who had arrived before nightfall from shorter distances.

'I asked if we could get our team put up and was answered in the affirmative, so we got our oxen "unhitched" and pony loosed and got them in the stable, then into the house and got off gloves, mufflers and top coats and after getting warmed a bit, sat in for supper. There are no teas here, just three meals a day. A good supper we took and after the cold days walking, enjoyed the snug quarters. After resting awhile we went out again and watered our cattle at the river. Then I went and posted the letters which have been too long delayed after being written, as you would see by the date.

'There is a flour mill here which, at present, is going night and day. People coming in from all quarters with wheat to be ground and as they have to get the flour back with them, they have to keep the mill going. They drive 30 and 40 miles to this mill. It gives the place a busy sound at nights and in the dark you think you might be in a busy centre of business but daylight dispels this illusion and you look upon a few houses which is Minnedosa. Jim and I slept well and well we did, well we didn't dream of the long anxious day we were to encounter on the morrow; of losing of roads and inability to find them, of the cheerless day and weary steps and of the cold silent night looking down upon us, lost on the wild prairies. The bed was the best I had slept in since I left the dear old home — a feather tick and feathers above us, German fashion. We had breakfast and paid $2.50 for all. People here know how to charge, nothing goes down but the dollar, dollar, dollar.

'We got started about eight o'clock and passing over the bridge our difficulties commenced. Where lay the road? That was the question, asking at the store we got directions. Before us lay a range of hills, which compose the river's banks. The rivers as a rule here do not have banks close to them but considerably back. Up through these hills lay the trail and it was a toilsome way to trace; the cart sometimes almost over on its side and threatening to capsize altogether our precious load. It is wonderful how these old carts hold together at all and I was prepared to see it collapse before our eyes. Hold together it did and over the sloping road it creaked away through among bushes and young poplars. Here and there we passed what had been tall trees, about 10 or 14 inches thick, but prairie fires have done their work of destruction and only the charred trunks stand up in melancholy array as we passed along. Two or three miles of toiling travel and the country began to open up and away before us we could see settlers' houses. One we passed uninhabited, whether the owner had grown tired of his land and water (for ponds were still dotted

Manitoba Archives

Minnedosa, Manitoba, in the 1880s. When the Lothian brothers passed through in December 1880 Minnedosa was still a small settlement, but the flour mill was 'going night and day'.

about, full of water) I don't know, but deserted it looked. A mile or two farther on, coming to a house, Jim went to ask the road, but the old blade was quite unconcerned, telling him to go this road or that or a short cut through another direction, as if the roads were as well defined as from Ayton to Berwich. You looked for roads and here and there could be seen a white line of snow, one of these we took and followed it coming to another house, where the line terminated. On enquiry we got directed onto another "line" taking us through stubble fields and finally to another homestead where Jim once more applied for information and got directed. The main trail to the Big Bend is called the "Oddy Trail" and it was this road we were trying to find and kept enquiring and hunting until three in the morning. [Probably 'Audy' Trail after James C. Audy, H B C clerk in charge of the Riding Mountain Post in the 1870s]. Jim, asking at a place was told we were a mile from it, which turned out to be six. Coming to where four roads crossed, we decided to take the right and so took the wrong! Going on a mile or so we came again to four trails. A house lay to the right of us, so Jim went off to ask. Only a bit woman body was in, who seemed to know no more of the road than Jim did, so he came back as wise as ever. Coming towards us was a sleigh and three men so we waited till they came up and applied for much needed information. We were to go the trail they had come and we were three miles still from the "Oddy Trail".

'Starting off again we soon came once more to the fatal four trails, but a good hearted man, busy on his building, set us on the right way rejoicing this time. Then we came to a fork, and again, which should we take? Having passed a house back a bit, thought it safer to return and enquire. So on enquiring were told either road was safe and so found it. We had decided on no dinner until we discovered this "Oddy Trail" but were forced to break our resolve as it was now far past dinner time. At the next house the good woman seemed very busy and said we'd get things easier and better at the next house. At the next place we stopped and asked if we could get our bannock toasted a little in the oven which was kindly granted. We fed the cattle and went in. They seemed a fine family. The good man was not at home. He has been a sailor and this is their first year at farming and she said they liked it fine. They gave us milk and potatoes and with a piece of ham and butter we had, we made a good dinner. We were only three miles still from the "Oddy Trail" and surely it would not elude our grasp again. We soon passed a house where a man was chopping wood. He said he was going our way in a few minutes and would make up on us as he was going to work up the road. On making up on us we had a conversation about the country. He says the crop is little worth this year, having been all frosted. He blames the ponds of water for the early frosts and says they will all have to be drained. I asked if frost was a general setback and in spite of his "No", I fear it is so up here. When people get settled they like to give their locality a good name. "There now", said he, "is the Oddy

Trail", and sure enough there was a well-tracked trail before us and glad we were to reach it, however long we might keep it. Where we got our dinner we were told there were two stopping places, the one six miles and the other nine miles on the road, so we thought we would surely make one. We now made some progress, the trail lying straight ahead. We passed four teams on their way to the City and farther on we met a half-breed with pony and sleigh. Half-breeds are the offspring of a white man and an Indian woman. Most of them are French half-breeds and it is they who do all the freighting in this country; that is, carry up all supplies into the interior. They use the Red River carts and every now and then you see long trains of 10 to 30 carts going along and with their wooden axels making a terrible chorus of noise. This sort of half civilized life seems to suit these folks and you can easily see the wild blood in their veins by their look. They are, however, very civil and are always ready with a pleasant nod as you pass. The one I mention here is half Scotch, Canning by name, a fine noble looking fellow too. We asked him if we were on the "Oddy Trail", and he said "No!" This gave us a surprise and coming to other trails leading off we again felt we were "lost" and knew not where we were.

'The day which had been dull and snowing, halted between two opinions as night drew on, but ultimately the snow clouds melted right and left and the stars burst out in a cloudless sky. We were now following a trail which at first had been well tracked but got less and less as we proceeded. At last we stood still, the trail melting altogether from sight. Jim went on ahead on foot, came back and reported no road. What was to be done, for this was only too plainly a road to the bush for wood, which had been visited during the day. Night was upon us and no house to be seen in the darkness. The moon, but new, shed a scanty light from the western sky ere she dipped beneath the horizon. In solemn grandeur the stars shone forth in the azure vault, where stretched the boundless prairies, cold and silent, with no kind of home to receive us or distant landmark to guide us to rest. Turn back we must, whatever else we must do. I never felt in reality despondent but only kept wondering what the end would be. Jim came on behind and I could hear him humming a tune to himself. At last we came to the road where we had turned off. I detected something dark against the sky, like a house, which on arriving at, found to be unoccupied and had to return the way I had come. We again pursued our way, hoping for another house. I walked with great difficulty, my boots being frozen hard as if my feet were encased in iron. To ride was too cold and so I just kept going on mechanically, Jim following in the same plight. Once more I was lured off with the hopes of a house which turned out to be a clump of trees. Jim made similar excursions. There was nothing for it but to go on until we saw a house, which might be long enough. In the distance I could hear the prairie wolves baying but all else was as still as death. Were we to go on all night thus? Or could we lie down and rest where we were? Were there not such a thing as hope in the human breast, how dark would be the path of man. . . . How strangely I felt this that night I cannot tell and when at last Jim said "Yonder is a light", I knew what the fruition of hope was.

'Sure enough, there was a light distinct from the host above — a light from some cottage window it must be. I mounted the pony and rode off but was stopped by a fence and had to return. Leaving the pony with Jim I went off on foot and reached the place where the welcome light was. I rapped at the door, which was soon opened, and I looked upon a cheerful scene . . . a family sitting comfortably around a fine lamp burning. I asked if we were far from McCallums and was told about two miles. I told them our circumstances and they kindly offered to put us up for the night. Mr. McClean, the good man, went out with me to where Jim was waiting and guided us in. We got our oxen and pony put in and got into the house where we had a warm cup of tea put before us. We made up our minds to continue our journey on Sunday, deeming it both the work of necessity and mercy as any day now a blizzard might come up, making the roads dangerous to travel on. Therefore, the next morning we pursued our travels, having still 14 miles to go. We reached our journey's end as the sun was setting and that experience has taught us it is both unsafe and unwise to travel after dark. You may say it was unwise to run the risk we did, but in prairie life there is always some risk and now and then you have to brave it or fail to accomplish what you want done.'

Thus they made their way to the district north of the Okanose Indian Reserve in the present-day municipality of Strathclair where Robert Campbell's land was located. They found the cabin in considerable disrepair, so their first task was to make it habitable for the winter and to prepare shelter for their oxen and pony.

The next letter was written by James to his brother, John; it is headed 'Old Hudson Bay Fort, Riding Mountains, December 13, 1880'. This fort was, presumably, the one near what is today the town of Elphinstone. It was here that they hoped to get mail. The letter describes their daily life in the cabin:

'Here are Bill and I out here in the far North West of Canada, sitting our two selves with a rousing fire of wood in a log house, with a lamp burning brightly on the table, both of us writing to the old country, as contented and comfortable as you like after our day's work which at present is putting our house in order to

keep out the cold and fixing the fire place so that it may be convenient to cook with. Bill has been building a sort of grate which is an old tin pan, large size and making a kind of jam stone at the side for our tea pot to stand on. Bill is a dabb at the baking, and does it real methodically too. I will tell you how we do. When we awake in the morning we give a look to see if the light of day is breaking. If so, Bill gives me a punch in the side and says, "Get up Jim". "Aye" says I and so jumps up, out amongst the warm bed clothes into the cold frosty air. However some one must do it and as well me as another. But this is my part of the days cooking, to get the breakfast, which is composed of a good dish of real Scotch Porrich. After lighting the fire which is easily done having plenty of good dry sticks, I put on a pot with five little tinny full of water and four hands full of oat meal and salt. By this time Bill is rising and then I leave him to give them a stir the time I go out to see if our stock is alright, which comprises one pony which belongs to Mr. Campbell on whose place we are and our own two oxen, Pete and Harry.

'Then we have breakfast on the porrich with syrup and they are glorious. Then we go to work until twelve when Bill gets the dinner ready while I work away because he has to bake and he does as much as serves for supper too. We have plenty of provisions with us to serve the winter. Flour, oatmeal, pork 144 lbs, tea, sugar etc. etc., so that we can defy the winters blasts. It gets dark very quick now, about half past four and fine clear weather it is too. We don't hurry with supper as the nights are long, so we wash ourselves and will read or write, sing, or do some bits of little jobs. And so I think we will spend a very pleasant winter. We have plenty of good books up with us and the concertina and lots of music. But you will say what are you going to work at after you get your house put right. Mr. Campbell arranged with us to go on his place for the winter and cut fence rails and if we like to remain, to plough in the spring. He

Lumber operation at Riding Mountain, 1905. James and William Lothian worked in a lumber camp in this area during the winter of 1880-81.

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James and Agnes Lothian with their sons Thomas and James, c. 1890. The log house with thatched roof was the first home on the James Lothian homestead in the Pipestone Valley.

will pay us four dollars an acre and what we put in crop he will provide the seed and we get two thirds of the crop. He also told us that there was plenty of work going on up here so that we would have plenty to do all winter.

'We are having splendid weather just now, ever since the frost came on, which is nearly two months, it has been steady frost with but one day's rain. You may go from one end of Manitoba to the other and never get a wet foot. The house in which we live is about a quarter of a mile from the Little Saskatchewan river from which we get our water and when we went to cut it open the ice was about 18 inches thick. And yet with such a steady frost you don't feel the cold about the body as much as at home. But your hands and ears, you must keep them covered, merely to break the wind or to keep the air off them. Your breath freezes on your beard and you soon get so white as an old man of eighty. This year it has been 36 degrees below zero already.'

On 15 January 1881, a letter was written by Jim to his brother, George, whom the two boys were trying to persuade to join them in Manitoba.

'We are in the "bush" lumbering and living a real shanty man's life. I am hauling to the creek with our own yoke of oxen for which I get thirty dollars a month and board for myself and oxen. Bill gets twenty and so we will have a nice little nest egg to work on in the spring. We expect to be three months at it if all goes well. It is not so cold in the bush as it would have been on the open prairie. We were about three weeks up here before we got on to work. But we weren't idle all the time as we had to start to put the house in order.

'In our shanty there are thirteen men just now but we are going to have more shortly. What with card playing, dominoes and cracking [talking] we spend a jolly night. We have a concertina and Shakespeare and a paper now and again. The weather is splendid, keen clear frost below 20 degrees every day and just sharp enough when the wind blows. But as Lord Dufferin has "beautifully remarked", "Our winter air, though sufficiently keen, is healthy and bracing and a most potent incentive to physical exertion. A constitution nourished upon oxygen of our atmosphere makes its possessor feel as though he could toss the pine trees in his glee." Bill and I have said this time after time this winter, whenever we get cold and off we went to work at something. We made a sleigh for our own use to haul rails if needed, but we don't know what will be done on the place yet. On the road to the river I cross over a nice lake about ½ mile in diameter and you can hear the ice give a crake now and again. The snow is just about 10 or 12 inches deep but they expect more soon. . . .

'I will tell you how I am clothed. Flannel shirt and two others, two pairs of drawers, a pair of trousers or overalls, that is a pair of strong cotton trousers, Guernsay vest, coat and one of the same stuff as the trousers, a pair of woollen mitts and leathern ones above them, two pairs of stockings, one of duffel, that is a thick sort of flannel made in the shape of slippers and a pair of mocassins. In fact the men look on Bill and I as two monsters and we are big along side most

In October 1908 James Lothian died of a heart attack in the harvest field. The funeral procession, photographed here from the grain elevator in the village of Pipestone, included many of James's friends from the nearby Sioux reservation.

of them. But they are all good workers in the bush, most of them are Canadians and have done a good deal of it. We have a good cook. Just now he is baking cakes. We are wearying to hear from home as it is more than six weeks since we got our last letter and papers. The mail is only once in three weeks. I would like to see a paper as much as anything to see what our Liberal government is going to do with Ireland.'

So they spent the winter months until the coming of spring put an end to the logging operations. They had earned enough, when added to their summer's wages, to outfit themselves for the land hunt to the south-west. However before leaving the Campbell property they fulfilled their contract by ploughing and seeding a portion of his land.

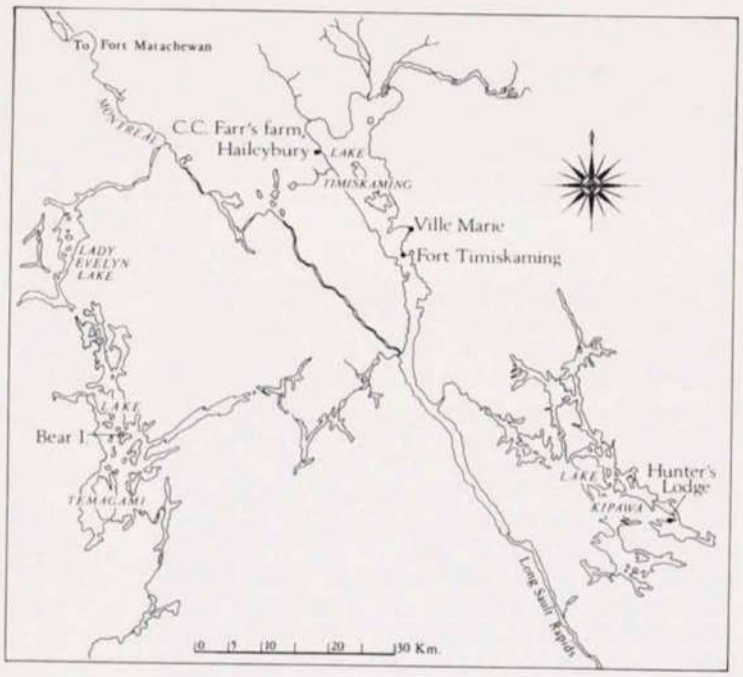
A letter written to their parents on 15 May 1881 describes their plans. '. . . we will be away out west from here about thirty miles south and one hundred west, provisions to last a couple of months or more, plow to start and break and a tent to sleep in and keep us dry. There you are, what do you think of your two sturdy sons, "stout lads, faith, and determined". . . . We have our oxen out now and they are looking well after their winter's work in the bush and after having plowed and harrowed and fenced in 10 acres of prairie, our first crop on the virgin soil. I plowed an acre a day, eight hours work, furrows between 12 and 14 inches wide. That's the way to get over the land.'

The next two months took them far from any postal facilities and it is not until July 1881 that we get another glimpse into their search. 'Well we started on Monday morning the 23rd of May on a land hunting expedition in the North West. After three miles of a pleasant drive, the crossing of the river [Little Saskatchewan] began to trouble us a little as it is pretty high and the place we had to cross was very rough with large stones. Bill said, as we were approaching it, he would give any man a dollar to be safe over it and we were nervous, I can tell you, as we had our whole effects with us and if anything happened to us we were done for. After getting everything put firm and lines tied to the oxen's horns to keep them right we plunged in . . . the oxen made a firm breast against it . . . until about three quarters of the way over Harry was being too strongly pressed by the tide . . . Bill was going to jump in and lead them but I wouldn't let him as it would have kept him wet all day. However we got out alright and weren't we glad, you bet. Got some provisions and money for the winter's work at the H.B.C. and took the road.'

The 'road' led them ultimately to the Pipestone Valley. Here the land met their requirements and they decided to settle. William, writing to his parents, expressed their deep satisfaction. 'Jim and I always said we would like if possible to go ahead of civilization, to go where settlers would be sure to follow and we came near enough having our wish as we were, you may say, the first to settle on the Pipestone and I was the first white man to sow grain in that part of the country and Jim was the first to put scyth on the ripe corn. So you see we have indeed been pioneers.' ◆

Fort Timiskaming

By Tom Roach



IT IS A PLEASANT DRIVE north from the Ontario town of Mattawa up through the valley of the upper Ottawa River. The river forms the boundary between Ontario and Quebec and the most picturesque views are from the Quebec side of the valley. First comes the town of Timiskaming, where a dam now hides the rocks of the Long Sault Rapids; then, a little farther on, lies Lake Timiskaming. This is a long, narrow lake running north-south with its shores bounded by high tree-covered hills. Long stretches of the shoreline are unchanged from a hundred or even two hundred years ago — a time when 'fur was king' and the Timiskaming District of the Hudson's Bay Company was famous for the quality of its beaver pelts.

The ideal place for a trading post on the lake is on the eastern of two promontories that run out from either shore and nearly divide the lake in two. The French had a post on Lake Timiskaming from at least 1720 and the North West Company was well established there by 1788. During the last century, the fort was the headquarters of the Hudson's Bay Company's District of Timiskaming. The district stretched from Mattawa in the south to roughly the height of land in the north; it included Lake Temagami in the west and Lake Kipawa to the east. The fort was made up of a collection of well-founded stone and frame buildings with a large fenced garden and a small farm, as well as a chapel and Protestant and Catholic burial grounds. The fort remained a centre of trade until the early years of this century when the Company opened stores in the towns newly founded on the Ontario side of the north end of the lake. Then its buildings were abandoned and the fort quickly fell prey to people scavenging for building material. Finally, about 1910, what remained was burned.

In its hey-day, Fort Timiskaming was an oasis of civilization in the midst of a wilderness of forests and lakes. Many a traveller received a warm welcome from the chief trader of the district, his family and staff of clerks. Colin Rankin, a native of Pembroke,

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Fort Timiskaming, 1876, on the occasion of a visit from Archbishop Duhamel. The white tents on shore belong to Indians converted to Catholicism by the Oblate fathers.

Ontario, was in charge of the Timiskaming District from 1872 to 1882. During this time he held the rank of factor and later, chief factor. He had upwards of a dozen smaller trading posts in his district and each had a manager who usually held the rank of clerk. These men came from a wide variety of backgrounds. Some, like Stephen Lafrican in charge of the Matachewan Post on the upper Montreal River, were older men who had joined the Company after working on their own or for competing companies. Others had been with the Company since their youth. Rankin kept several of the youngest clerks with him at the fort where they were trained for possible promotion to the charge of a post of their own.

During the quarter century 1875 to 1900, these clerks saw great changes in the lake and their livelihood. The most dramatic and visible change was in transportation. At the beginning of this period, the district's yearly harvest of furs was carried from the fort in a canoe brigade that descended the rapids of the Ottawa to Mattawa. When the brigade returned, its Indian voyageurs hauled the new outfit up over the portages and rapids of the Ottawa River to the fort, for distribution to the posts by smaller brigades of canoes. Twenty-five years later when the bundles of furs left the fort, they were loaded onto a steamer that took them to the head of the Sault Rapids, where the Canadian Pacific Railway took them over. Supplies were carried north in the same manner.

Canoes, steamers, Indians, settlers, opposition traders, and prospectors were all a part of the lives of the Company's clerks on Timiskaming. Some wrote of their adventures in letters home while others saved their stories for later when they appeared as magazine articles. From its first years at the turn of the century, the monthly journal *Rod and Gun in Canada* carried many of these tales. The Company required that each establishment keep a daily record of events. Most clerks found it hard to fill in more than a line or two a day in their journals. Luckily, some were more creative or perhaps they saw it as a proper diary where they should write their thoughts instead of using cryptic initials to record who had visited them or what their hired men were doing. From diarists such as these, we form an idea of their way of life. The person who wrote the journal varied according to the whim of the manager of the post. At the smaller places, it was generally the man in charge. At Fort Timiskaming, Colin Rankin wrote it up himself when he was there, while after the district headquarters

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An Indian voyageur carries a load over a portage on the Quinze River along the route from Lake Timiskaming to Lake Abitibi.

Public Archives of Canada

The Fort Timiskaming bateau pulling a load of red pine logs, 1897.

was moved to Mattawa in 1884, the manager of the fort delegated the responsibility of keeping up the journal to his storekeeper.

Typical of the young clerks living together in one of the houses at the fort, was Charles Cobbold Farr. He was the third son of a Suffolk clergyman and there is a hint of desperation in the way his family sent him overseas. Up to 1868 he had been attending a private boarding school with the hope of entering the Indian Civil Service. When his father died, he had to leave the school and take a private tutor and 'cram' for the civil service entrance examinations. He failed to win a place and, a few months later, was put on a ship bound for Montreal with one hundred pounds of his family's money as his capital. He was told to invest his money and live off the proceeds — a high expectation for an eighteen-year-old who had had no business experience whatsoever. Not surprisingly, he was soon penniless, took labouring jobs, and refrained from telling his family in England all the details. Eventually he got a job as an axeman on a survey of the Ontario-Quebec border north of Lake Timiskaming and, while his party was stuck at the fort waiting for the ice to form, he made the acquaintance of one of the clerks, A. G. Ryder, the son of the Canon of Dublin Anglican Cathedral. Ryder arranged an interview for Farr with the then Chief Trader, Charles Stuart. Stuart, who was just coming to the end of his stay at Fort Timiskaming, recommended to Colin Rankin that Farr be hired.

Farr joined the Company in the late summer of 1874 and he stayed at the fort only a few months to learn the trade and make a start on the Ojibway language. He was then sent to the post at Hunter's Point, located on a small lake south and east of the fort. Hunter's Lodge, as it was also called, was an important trading post in the district, because it was located on one of the traditional access routes to the Ottawa Valley from Lake Timiskaming. The lodge had been built in 1847 to capture the trade of Indians using this route to the south but, by the time Farr took over the place, its main role was as a bulwark against the incursions of 'opposition traders' ascending the Dumoine River.

Writing in the January 1905 issue of *Rod and Gun in Canada*, Farr described his first charge:

'There were many fine buildings, all "posted" buildings made . . . as follows: Logs of about eight feet in length are "sided" and tennoned at the ends. Then a frame of squared posts is slotted to receive the tennoned ends of the logs which are all slipped in from the top.' There was a canoe store, provisions store, cabins for hired men and visiting Indians and finally, the trader's house. The latter was 'a trifle more pretentious than the other buildings. The paint on the window casings and sills, not to mention the door, must have cost fully ten dollars. One cannot,

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Chief Michele Baptiste, Farr's best friend among the Lake Timiskaming Ojibway, with his wife at Fort Matachewan.

however, have grandeur without cost and moreover, there is a verandah, a luxury that is a distinction in itself.'

The house had four rooms, all on one floor, and was not exactly a pleasure to live in. After a dam was built on the Kipawa River, the level of Hunter's Lake was raised each spring and the house flooded. Its location was somewhat isolated as well.

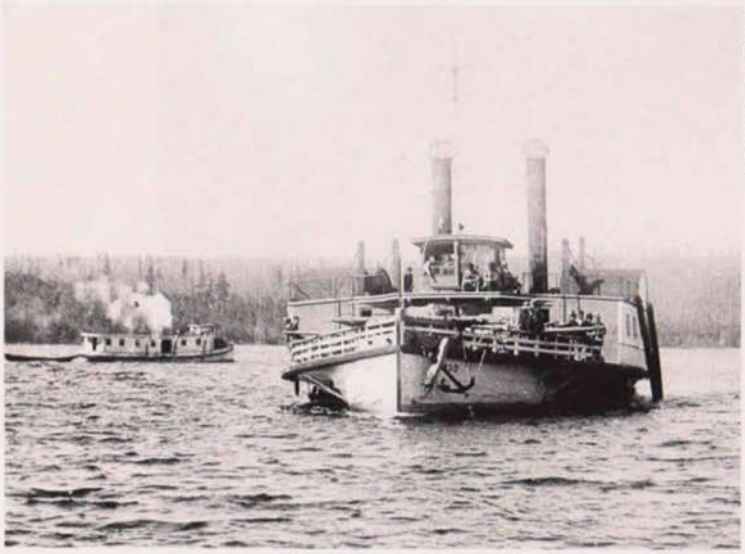
'I wished that I could scare up a ghost,' wrote Farr. 'The creaking of the timbers of which the house was built would give me hope but nothing ever came of it but dead, flat monotony and an isolation that at times appeared to me a living death.'

It was the Ojibway Indians who made the place come alive. In the spring, as soon as travel was possible, the families held a rendezvous on the sand flats surrounding the post. Then, one by one, the hunters took their furs in to be traded. The reception they were given varied according to the value of the pelts they brought in. If their hunt had been good and their canoes loaded down with furs, then the hunters could 'sit in stately dignity in their canoes, while the hired servants of the company, white men, carried their bales of fur from canoe to the storehouse. And such an Indian would be the proud master of the hour. The trader himself would unbend, and greet this hunter as he landed, that is if his hunt was very good. If only middling, then all the trader could be expected to do would be to greet him effusively at the door, but if the hunt had been bad, then the Indian would carry his own attenuated packs into the store himself, and endeavour to attract the tardy attention of the master by timid coughing.'

The band stayed around the post until all the furs were in, packed, and the brigade ready to set off for the district headquarters. Then the small fleet of canoes was launched with cheers and a *fue de joie!*

If he called at other times of the year to trade his furs, the successful hunter would still be given a warm welcome. At Christmas or New Year's, for instance, he might be invited into the trader's house and shown to the best chair in the place. At Hunter's Lodge this was a red rocking chair that Farr had brought in for himself. If an Indian did a special favour for the trader, then he would be rewarded in a more tangible and long lasting way, as was the hunter Weenusk.

Farr, with Weenusk and a party of paddlers, was making his way to a hunter's camp to trade for furs. On the way, he met an 'opposition trader' who was bound for the same camp. The two groups of Indian paddlers intermingled and chatted on the portages but, once on the water, each group paddled as hard as it could. Farr's men were tired, however, and much as he urged them on, they could not pull ahead. It looked as if he was sure to lose the race and the chance to trade. On the last portage before the hunter's camp, the opposition trader invited Farr to join him in his canoe so that Farr's men could get a rest. Farr was about to refuse when their attention was diverted by hoarse grunts and the crashing of



Public Archives of Canada

The paddle steamer 'Argo', c. 1890, the third steamer to cruise Lake Timiskaming.

bushes. Their presence had disturbed a bear.

The trader and his men threw down their bundles, armed themselves, and dashed off into the bush to hunt the animal. Farr trudged disconsolately across the portage convinced that his men must also have joined the hunt. At the end of the portage, he was surprised to find two of his three paddlers waiting for him in the canoe; only Weenusk was missing. Farr climbed in, angry at the loss of one man but consoled that at least he had a head start on his competition. He ordered that they go directly to the hunter's camp, only a mile or so away. His men laughed at him and paddled along the shore line, aiming for a small point. Farr became convinced they intended to hunt the bear from the canoe. 'I sat there helpless and wild' he later wrote. As they neared the point, the noise of the bear's passage increased; any second it would appear and his men would join the chase. Then: 'suddenly, with an unearthly cry, the bushes on the shore parted and out jumped not the bear but Weenusk! He ran along the shore to the end of the point and at the same time the crack of a rifle rang out and a bullet went ricochetting across the water ahead of him.' But, Farr's opponent had been successfully delayed.

With Weenusk paddling, Farr and his men had ample time to reach the hunter's camp and complete their trading before their competitor appeared. 'I had every skin secured' recorded Farr, 'and was able to go down to the beach and entertain my friend with pleasant conversation, just as he had done to me on the portage. But I found that this time it was he who lacked cordiality and, in addition, he abused Weenusk shamefully.'

For his audacity, Farr rewarded Weenusk with a complete suit of clothes. His companions, however, gave Weenusk a new name. He became Makwa, the bear.

The increased competition to obtain furs from the Indian hunters affected the easy-going relationship that had existed between the Company's representatives and the trappers. It was natural to expect that if goods were given to a man 'on account', he would work to pay off his debt. In the case of Indian fur trappers, it was expected that they would bring the furs to the Company's posts for trade and settlement of their debts. Managers of posts were thereby tempted to be generous with the value of the goods they advanced to their trappers. It was a temptation that had to be continuously resisted. After over a century of contact with fur buyers and the Hudson's Bay Company, there were still great differences between the two parties to the bargain. Their concepts of 'debt' and its obligations were generally miles apart. Experience showed that it was all too easy for an 'opposition trader' to buy a winter's catch of furs from a hunter, especially if rum or 'high wines' were included in the trade. The Hudson's Bay Company trader had to employ a nice degree of judgement and tact in deciding on the value of goods that could be advanced to a hunter. Too little, and he might offend the man and lose the debt entirely, or the man and his family would have a hard time of it and be driven from the land for a wage-paying job with a lumber company or a mine. Too much, and the trader risked a default because of a hard winter or because someone else came along at the right time.

The worst time for the trader was in early summer when the annual reckoning of his books was done. For a clerk like Farr, in charge of one of the district's more important posts, this meant that he accompanied his furs on their journey out to district headquarters at Fort Timiskaming. With him, he brought his account books and inventories, and his records and performance were scrutinized and criticized by the chief trader. At smaller posts, like that at Bear Island on Lake Temagami, a clerk made an annual visit in early June to bring in the new packet, check the books, make an inventory, instruct the trader and perhaps make a speech to the assembled hunters on the necessity of lowering their debts. The clerk then returned to the fort with the bundles of fur from the post.

A trader's performance was judged by whether or not he had increased the amount and value of the furs he purchased without increasing his post's debt load to an unacceptable level. Some increase in the returns from a post could always be obtained by increasing the debts, hence the temptation to be generous. The real trick was to lower the value of the debts while increasing trade. With the numbers of 'opposition

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At the Hudson's Bay Company post on Bear Island, men are employed in hauling ashore red pine logs. On the left are a number of young men who were travelling by canoe through the northern wilderness in the summer of 1897.

traders' and their runners scouring the district, it was the exceptional man who was able to do this. The worst thing that could happen was for the furs received to decrease in value while the amount of debt increased. This was what was happening to the post at Bear Island on Lake Temagami. In 1892 the inspecting clerk, J. Mann, blamed the decline on sickness in some families, the death of some of the more reliable hunters, and incursions of competing traders from the Sturgeon Falls area to the south.

The Temagami Post was manned by the Turner family who had originally come to the lake, not as clerks, but as 'hired men'. Their problems continued for a number of years with occasional reversals. The year 1894, for instance, was a good year with Mann noting in the post's daily journal that his inspection had found the trade to be still good and that debts had been lowered. By 1889, it must have been clear that something had to be done, or the post abandoned. The Turners were replaced by Harry Woods, a new clerk practically fresh out from England who had joined the Company on the recommendation of C. C. Farr. The Turners stayed on at Bear Island, opening one of the first hotels on the lake which was just then experiencing the beginnings of a flood of tourists.

Once back at their posts after the annual review of their work, the clerks would fall into a seductively easy routine. During the summer months there was not much trading activity, for furs, to be at their best or 'prime', had to be trapped in the winter. Families of hunters would come in for fresh supplies 'on account' and the trader had to make sure that his hired men were kept busy in the garden. Potatoes and other root crops were the staples and enough had to be grown to last through the winter. In addition, the trader had to keep up his books and the daily journal.

Even at the small posts, there was a continual coming and going of people. It would be a rare day that one or two families did not drop in to visit, and perhaps trade, as they made their way from one part of the country to another. At Bear Island, this activity

Public Archives of Canada

Dr Robert Bell of the Geological Survey of Canada, with one of his crews of men. Undated.

was supplemented, as the century came to a close, by increasing numbers of touring canoe parties and inspections of the new forest reserve by government officials. The posts were the social centres of the areas they served, not just because they were places of trade, but because they were small communities in themselves. At the end of his stay at Hunter's Point in 1883, Farr had with him a considerable group: his wife, daughter Anne, an adopted daughter, a junior clerk, a steward or storekeeper, a locally engaged cook and a housemaid/nurse and two hired men. Harry Woods at Temagami had a similar though smaller staff. At the fort there were many more people: up to four or five junior clerks, the manager and his family, an assistant manager and his family and enough hired hands to work the attached farm that had cattle as well as horses and hens and grew oats, hay and a large field of potatoes.

There was always some work to be done in the store, keeping up the accounts and moving supplies from the warehouse, as well as actually trading. At Bear Island, book work occupied a total of four or five days a month. Just before an inspection, it was not unusual for two or three days in a row to be filled with this work. The storekeeper at the fort, of course, was a lot busier and would spend two or three days out of a week on his accounts and at the year's end, he reported having to work through the night in order to arrive at a balance. Of course, all the stores were open for seven days a week. As Farr said: 'Sunday stopped at the Sault', the biggest of the sets of rapids on the Ottawa above Mattawa.

In fact, Sunday was often the busiest day of the week for the storekeeper at Fort Timiskaming. The Oblate missionaries had first settled on the point opposite the post, and though they had since moved to the village of Ville Marie in the north-east corner of the lake, they still held services on the point. These masses were popular and, once they were over, the congregation paddled or snowshoed across the lake and paid a visit to the store.

Bear Island, on the other hand, could be really quiet for Harry Woods. The young postmaster found Ojibway society to be so strange that social contacts were abbreviated. In June 1899, only four days after his arrival, he wrote, 'awefully lonesome' in his journal even though he had had a visit from Thomas Southworth, the Director of Ontario's Bureau of Forestry, and party, as well as visits from several groups of tourists and a team of Fire Rangers. Two years later, things had gotten worse for him and he noted: 'Really it seems absurd to keep a journal of occurrences here, for there's actually nothing going on. The Indians are not faithful to the H.B. Co like their forefathers, there's very few real Indians trading at the post, what the most are, a lot of half breeds.' But that was in March, just before break-up, and even though it is indicative of Wood's failure to adapt to his new surroundings, one has to make an allowance, for this is the hardest time of the year for anyone living in an isolated location.

It was not much different at the fort. Although the larger staff gave the place a different atmosphere, it was the storekeeper who had to deal with the problems brought in by settlers who were feeling 'bushed'. At the end of March, 1888, the journal from Fort Timiskaming reports: 'A. Anderson came in about six-o-clock & was again making enquiries about the money *he says* is here, 180,000 dollars. Had a great bother to get rid of him nothing will knock the crazy notion out of his head.' And this at the same time as the Fort was out of provisions: '. . . no grease pork or flour only a few pounds of sugar and quite out of a host of minor things,' continues the entry. It had been a busy year and they had to wait till after a late departure of the ice before the main load of new supplies could be got in. In the meantime, they made do with small quantities that were hauled in with great effort and expense by horse teams over rough tracks cut through the forest.

From 1886, steamers plied Lake Timiskaming, stopping at the fort twice a week or more as they made their way between Ville Marie in the north, and the head of the Sault rapids in the south. The *La Minerve* was the largest of the vessels, and she had continual problems with her propeller. Several times during her first years of operation, 1887 and 1888, the propeller's blades fell off and the steamer, out of control, ran aground. Once, while coming into dock at Fort Timiskaming, the communications system

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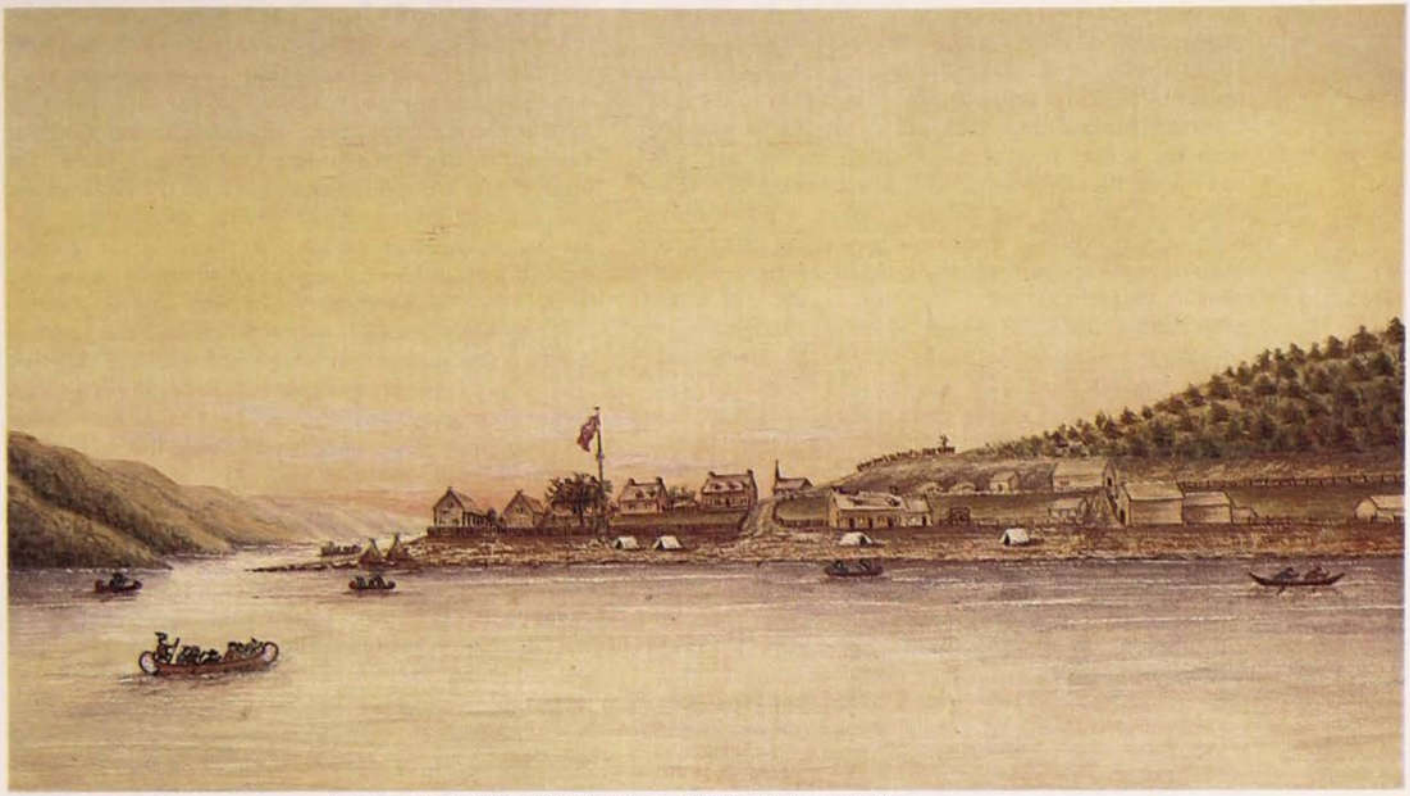


A water-colour of Fort Timiskaming c. 1870, by Andrew Lockhart.

between the bridge and the engine room failed and the *La Minerve*, at full-speed, ran up onto the sandy beach in front of the buildings. Worse, an almost irreplaceable chain and anchor were lost in the attempt to pull her off.

As the settlement of Ville Marie grew through the 1880s and clearings began to appear on the Ontario side of Lake Timiskaming, official recognition was made of the new role being played in the area by the Hudson's Bay Company. The fort was first designated the post office and then, in August of 1887, the Company's store at Ville Marie became the sub-post office for the north end of the lake. This store had been opened in 1886 to compete with an establishment belonging to one of the settlers, E. A. Guay.

By 1890, the journals of the fort show that virtually the only furs that came into the post were those that had been traded at its outposts. The fort, however, was doing a roaring trade with the settlers. Most of the trade was for cash though some was in kind: wood products, oats and hay. The settlers had accounts and, if their debts became too large, they used their land as security. 'A. Beaubesen came in the afternoon and signed the transfer of his lots as security for his account with the Company.' It is a typical entry in the journal for a transaction undertaken by three settlers in 1887. Such legal processes were eased by the fact that C. C. Farr, who had transferred from Hunter's Point to take charge of the fort in 1883, had been named a Justice of the Peace. The combination of administrative duties and his job at the fort meant that he was extremely busy. Farr took part of the weight from his shoulders by placing the Ville Marie store in the hands of J. Mann. How well Mann did his job is debatable; the fort's journal shows that he spent every spare minute he could find at the fort rather than at the village.

As a Justice of the Peace, Farr had to travel a lot. If a sick man wanted to make a will, Farr had to go to the bedside, taking a priest with him as a witness. When James MacLean attacked Carl Fontain with an axe, severely injuring him (apparently the quarrel arose from liquor Fontain was selling), and MacLean was brought to the fort, Farr and Father Maurier set off to see Fontain and get his disposition. MacLean was kept a prisoner at the fort until Farr's return and a hearing was held on the evidence. He was then sent down river to Aylmer, Quebec, for a trial before the provincial court. Farr had to make all these arrangements: swearing in a special constable, handing out money for the journey and preparing a report.

Some incidents that Farr had to deal with have a

grim humour. One April night, a labourer at a shanty suddenly died. Farr was initially asked just to look after the man's possessions until his next-of-kin were tracked down and notified. The labourer was given a Catholic funeral and then his shantymates got on with the wake. Several hours later, his friends had convinced themselves that it had all been a horrible mistake. Their pal was not really dead. He had only been in a trance, and must now be waking up to find himself in a box from which he could not escape. The post's journal records that first they argued with their priest who, not able to get them to change their minds, eventually told them to get the Justice of the Peace. It was nine o'clock at night when Farr was called and agreed to the exhumation. With appropriate tools and an audience from the fort, Farr, in his official capacity, and the shantymen went to the cemetery and dug up the coffin. They found the deceased cold and stiff and incapable of waking from any trance. Hurriedly , because it was now nearly ten, the coffin was closed and reburied.

As the years passed, Farr and the other clerks at Fort Timiskaming were compensated for the hard work created by increasing numbers of settlers. This was in the variety and greater number of visitors, official and unofficial, who stayed at the fort. Delegations of church dignitaries came regularly to the lake to inspect the work of the Oblates at their mission and to observe the success of the colonization society that was behind the settlement at Ville Marie. Dr Robert Bell of the Geological Survey of Canada arrived with several crews of men to spend the summer of 1887 in the area.

Perhaps there was some misunderstanding at the fort as to what exactly Dr Bell was supposed to be doing. He sent his crews off to explore and report on the Montreal and Frederick House Rivers, and on the Temagami and Lady Evelyn Lakes, areas all to the west and north-west of Fort Timiskaming. However, he did not go out with any of his parties. 'Dr. Bell still here,' reported the journal at the fort day after day. Presumably he was very good company for somebody, almost certainly Farr and his family. After a week or two, Bell went out with one of the Company's teams delivering supplies to the northern posts. He then visited C. C. Farr's farm, which was already called 'Haileybury', and was photographed in front of the house that Paul Lawlor had built for Farr. Later in August, a special trip was organized for him. A circular route was followed that took him up the Montreal River to the post at Matachewan and then south through Lady Evelyn Lake to Lake Temagami before turning east and returning to the fort. In case anyone should think of charging Dr Bell with shirking, it must be said that he departed for Ottawa with his survey crews in early September. They chose the tough cross-country route back to Ottawa: eastwards from Lake Kipawa, and across the headwaters of the Dumoine and Coulonge river systems.

As the century drew to a close, the land filled up with settlers, lumbermen, prospectors and tourists. The end of the Timiskaming District as a source for furs lay just around the corner. Of all the clerks, Farr was the one who saw the writing on the wall and decided to throw in his lot with the forces of change. In 1885 he purchased his farm on what is now the site of the town of Haileybury, Ontario, and was thereafter openly working it with the help of Paul Lawlor. Perhaps this distraction, combined with his duties as Justice of the Peace, was responsible for the criticisms of the Company's inspectors who visited him in the spring of 1888. They said he was a 'fair Indian trader', was fluent in French and Ojibway and that he got on well with people but that he required 'a little more supervision and will probably be more successful in charge of a single post than a sub district.' This would have meant a demotion for Farr and shortly after this he made up his mind to resign from the Company. In May of the following year, he moved to his farm and worked at turning it into a town.

For all the settlers on Timiskaming, the last decade of the nineteenth century passed slowly by. None of them had a lot of money to spend. The traditional market for the produce of settlers on the Ottawa Valley frontier had been the lumber camps but by the 1890s most of the white pine had been cut from the shores of the lake and the shanties had moved on into the interior. The settlers were too far from the pulp and paper mills of the south to market the spruce that mostly covered their farmlands. They had to wait for the first years of the new century for the railway line that was to bring them almost instant prosperity.

The native people, on the other hand, found things happening faster than they probably ever thought possible. They reacted variously. Family groups who wanted to stay with their old way of life, moved away from the lake to the northern part of the district. Families that Farr had first met in the 1870s when he was at Hunter's Point had moved to Matachewan on the upper Montreal River by the later 1890s. Others integrated themselves into the local wage economy, working for a week or two or three and then going off and doing a little trapping or hunting. Unfortunately, some found themselves to be easy marks for settlers prepared to give them spirits or diluted high wines in exchange for a pelt or two or perhaps some casual labour. Then, early in the next century, the railway arrived and with it the discovery of silver and the beginning of the town of Cobalt. Hordes of prospectors flooded the bush and towns sprang up almost overnight. Even families who had moved far away from Timiskaming were affected. The days of the Indian fur trade on the Lake had come to an end.◆

SALISH WEAVING

By Paula Gustafson. Douglas & McIntyre, Vancouver; University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1980. 132 pp., illus. $24.95.

ARGILLITE: ART OF THE HAIDA

By Leslie Drew and Douglas Wilson. Hancock House, Vancouver, 1980. 313 pp., illus. $40.00.

Reviewed by Olive P. Dickason

These glossy, coffee-table editions are still another testimonial to the vitality of West Coast Amerindian arts and crafts. The traditional outpouring of the arts from this area is now in danger of being rivalled by the amount of publishing on the subject.

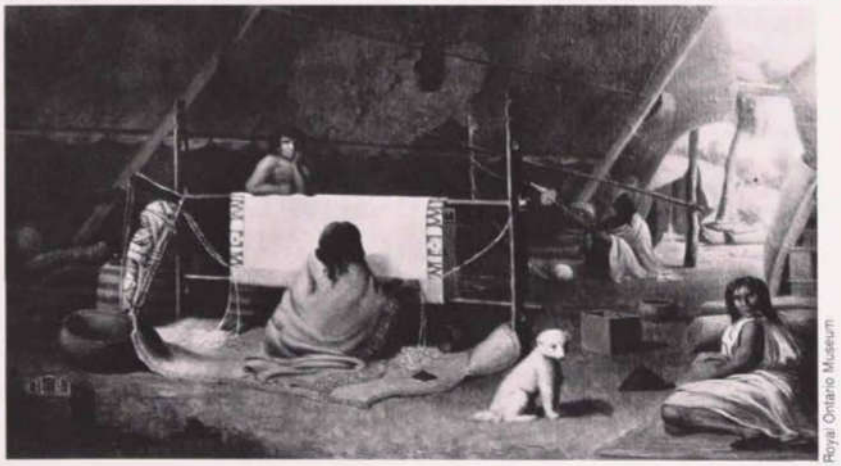
Paula Gustafson's handsome *Salish Weaving* displays a craftsman's attention to detail in its meticulous examination of a once all-but-lost art. Weaving, particularly that of the Salish, was an early casualty in the 'opening up' of the Northwest Coast to the ways of the white Western World. Contemporary reports of voyagers almost invariably commented on the blankets worn by the natives; from the very first these garments were sought by collectors. But in spite of such spontaneous and genuine appreciation, few of them survived, even when they found their way into museum collections. This was especially true for the Salish 'plain' blanket, the production of which was more concerned with ritual meanings than with eye-catching effects; in the case of the more spectacular Chilkat blanket woven by the Tlingit to the north, more continuity was maintained. However, all of these laboriously produced garments quickly lost out to the products of industrialization.

Early generations of weavers passed away and traditional techniques slipped into near oblivion. When Oliver Wells of Sardis, B.C., grandson of an 1863 homesteader, became interested in Salish crafts, he was intrigued to discover three 'plain' blankets still in possession of families of the area. No one knew how they had been woven, nor even remembered ever having seen such weaving being done. With the help of early reports, and Paul Kane's well-known painting of a Salish weaver at work, Wells and Adeline Lorenzetto of the Ohamil Reserve devised a small loom on which the latter, after careful study of the surviving examples, produced two small blankets. By that time, word had arrived of a weaver who did remember the old techniques — Mary Peters of Seabird Island. Thus in the 1960s was an ancient craft revived and given new life as old techniques were adapted to new materials. Salish weaving being produced today has in its turn become as prized by collectors as its antecedents.

Similarly, as Leslie Drew and Douglas Wilson tell us in *Argillite: Art of the Haida*, slate carvers of the Queen Charlotte Islands have adapted traditional designs and techniques to new demands. In this case, however, the process occurred spontaneously within the Haida community; its artists were the first on the West Coast to produce art for sale. The great adapter of Haida design to this new market was Charles Edenshaw (1839-1924); the principles he worked out remain the basis of the art today. As so often happens, Edenshaw became far more widely recognized after his death than he had been during his lifetime. His reputation has had the advantage of the fact that some of his descendants have also been extraordinarily gifted. Brilliant as this record is, it still hardly warrants the claim that the Haida excel all other 'American races' in artistic skill, an assumption which the authors barely resist.

Their aim in this compilation appears to have been to present as comprehensive a picture as possible of those aspects of Haida life, beliefs and history that bear in any way on the development of carving in argillite, along with a history of the slate itself. The care with which they have pursued this goal is characterized more by a desire to complete the record, than with presenting a critically balanced story. Thus the reader is subjected to a plethora of detail of minor historical importance without being led to new insights. Lesser artists come in for much attention, while a contemporary master such as Bill Reid gets comparatively short shrift; his crucial role in the current florescence of West Coast art is not adequately analyzed. A younger major figure such as Robert Davidson is acknowledged but not put into proper context, nor is it mentioned that he is a great-grandson of Charles Edenshaw. More attention to editing would have avoided some embarrassing lapses. The book's strength lies in the variety of the carvings it illustrates from a

Coast Salish woman weaving a blanket of dog hair and mountain-goat wool; another woman spinning the wool and in the foreground, a shorn dog. From the painting by Paul Kane, 1846.



Royal Ontario Museum

Provincial Archives of British Columbia

Josette Legace, daughter of a voyageur and a Spokan woman, wife of Chief Factor John Work. With her daughter Suzette and son David. Undated.

great many collections; in this, its scope is a virtue, even as it juxtaposes the exciting with the less interesting.

Dr Dickason is associate professor, department of history, University of Alberta and author of 'Indian Arts in Canada'.

'MANY TENDER TIES'
Women in Fur-trade Society, 1670-1870

By Sylvia Van Kirk. Watson and Dwyer, 166 Roslyn Road, Winnipeg, 1980. 301 pp., illus. $19.50 cloth; $10 paper.

Reviewed by John S. Galbraith

During the last decade a radically different approach to the history of the fur trade has developed. Previously, historians had been preoccupied with the economics of the fur traders. The Indians were generally a vague mass on the other side of the exchange process, and women — Indian, mixed-blood, and white — received scant attention. Recently younger scholars have devoted their attention to these neglected participants in the trade. The result has been books and articles with a fresh perspective.

Among the leaders of the new school is the author of the present volume. She has written an important book which greatly revises long-held assumptions about the relations between women and the personnel of the fur trade. Professor Van Kirk traverses two hundred years of fur-trade history, from the first liaisons of fur traders with Indian women, the transition to unions with mixed-blood women, and the advent of white wives.

Most accounts of white-Indian contacts, when they mention Indian women at all, describe their relationships to their white sexual partners in terms suggesting that in most cases they were used by their temporary mates and discarded as unwanted chattels at their partners' whims. The author maintains that such promiscuous encounters were not the rule. Rather, enduring commitments were made which resulted in stable family units.

Indian women were far more important to the lives of the fur traders than mere sources of sexual gratification. They acted as interpreters and guides: intermediaries between their people and the traders. They made moccasins and snowshoes, prepared pemmican, planted corn, trapped small game, and indeed made themselves essential to the survival of their mates. Prostitution, which has been emphasized, was not the usual relationship; marriage *à la façon du pays* was the established practice.

Any writer dealing with the lives of Indian women in the early years of European contact is confronted by the fact that there is little evidence from the women themselves, and that which survives is filtered through the testimony of white men who assumed that marriage liberated Indian women from a society in which they lived in degradation. But, as the author points out, the Indian wife sacrificed much of her autonomy when she married a white. By the mores of her adopted community, she was expected to be submissive to her husband.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century the practice of taking Indian wives had become uncommon. Instead, the next generation of fur traders turned to mixed-blood women who by European standards were considered more attractive. In the early years these mixed-blood wives performed the same functions as their Indian progenitors. Their Indian mothers taught them their skills and at the same time through their white fathers they were made more readily adaptable to European society. More and more 'the custom of the country' was superseded by European standards of marriage. Also, in time, the mixed-blood women drifted away from their Indian heritage and, by the influence of their white fathers, were trained to conform to the ways of proper English ladies. Of course, given nineteenth-century racial attitudes, conformity did not necessarily involve acceptance.

The arrival of white women as the wives of Hudson's Bay personnel had a great effect on fur-trade society. These 'tender exotics' regarded mixed-blood women as a menace, and their proscription against social contact with native wives was reinforced by their husbands and by missionaries, particularly Protestant, who condemned the 'immorality' of marriages by the custom of the country. A great impetus to the condem-

nation of mixed marriages was the arrival of a now-virtuous Governor George Simpson with his English bride Frances. Thereafter mixed-blood women were not acceptable in 'high society' at Red River.

In describing the bigoted attitudes of Frances and most other white women, the author might have easily succumbed to the impulse to employ a moralistic tone. Professor Van Kirk does not do so. Instead she analyzes the social conditions that contributed to this compulsion. This discussion is a particularly impressive part of the book. Regarding George Simpson, the author is not quite so clinical. She condemns Simpson's treatment of his 'bits of brown' and the hypocrisy that he displayed in his insistence on racial purity as an entree to social acceptance. With her distaste for Simpson's characteristics in this regard, few will disagree.

The 'tender exotics' did not flourish in the inhospitable land of the fur trade. Those white women who did the best came from backgrounds which prepared them for a life of hardship. The inability of the frail Victorian ladies to transplant to inclement climes brought a belated triumph to the mixed-blood women. Not even Simpson could enforce his decision to exclude them from the higher reaches of society, and only a few Hudson's Bay officers followed his example in turning out their mixed-blood companions. Simpson indeed by the late 1840s had changed his position. He urged that unmarried missionaries be sent out and that, if they married, they should select a 'respectable' acculturated native lady.

In a brief concluding chapter, 'A World We Have Lost', Van Kirk describes the effect on fur-trade society of the arrival of Canadian settlers after 1870. The racial prejudice of the newcomers was no less virulent than that expressed by the white ladies of the earlier period.

This is an impressive piece of work. It is well researched, well written, and fresh in its approach to an important and long-neglected subject. Adding to the interest of the volume are a large number of illustrations.

Dr Galbraith, professor of history, University of California, has devoted years of research to the life and career of Sir George Simpson. He is author of 'The Little Emperor'.

Great Gray Owls, from a photograph by Robert Taylor.

THE GREAT GRAY OWL
Phantom of the Northern Forest

By Robert W. Nero. Photographs by Robert R. Taylor. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, 1980. 168 pp., illus. $20.95 from Murray Books, 1753 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2G6

Reviewed by C. Stuart Houston

The history of the Great Gray Owl is inextricably entwined with that of the 'fur countries', dating back to the time when these lands were governed by the 'Company of Adventurers . . . Trading into Hudson's Bay'. Although the Great Gray Owl also resides in the forests of northern Scandinavia, this retiring bird was overlooked by Linnaeus and other Europeans and was first described from Fort Severn on Hudson Bay. The 'type specimen' was collected at Severn by Hudson's Bay Company trader Andrew Graham, and described and named in Latin by John Reinhold Forster in 1772.

The first known nest of the Great Gray Owl, with three downy young, was found on 23 May 1826, near Great Bear Lake by Dr John Richardson, surgeon and naturalist with the second Franklin expedition. The second recorded nest was found on 19 July 1862, north of Fort Good Hope, by Roderick Ross

Macfarlane, a Hudson's Bay Company factor.

Subsequent nests, found in what became the North-West Territories after the Hudson's Bay Company had surrendered its territorial rights in 1870, were also from localities associated with the fur trade: Fort Providence, Peel River, Fort Chipewyan and Fort Carlton. This historical association is entirely appropriate, for the Great Gray Owl has a beauty and a mystery that symbolizes the wild, once unspoiled forests of the Canadian North.

All of this has been captured by Nero and Taylor in what in my opinion is the most beautiful book ever published for a single bird species. Readers of *The Beaver* are familiar with Nero's evocative prose and Taylor's superb photographs. They will not be disappointed by this book, which relates the story of a most fascinating species of owl, illustrated by 30 colour and 57 black-and-white photographs. It presents the results of intensive research in an interesting manner for layman and scientist alike.

For many years the Great Gray Owl was considered to be one of the rarest of western Canadian birds, second only to the Whooping Crane as being most in danger of extinction. Few birdwatchers had ever seen a Great Gray Owl, and then only when occasional individuals wandered south in winter presumably from the far northern forests. Although Dr Richardson 150 years ago had correctly stated it to be 'an inhabitant of all the woody districts lying between Lake Superior and latitudes 67° or 68° and between Hudson's Bay and the Pacific', John Macoun as late as 1909 still quoted an erroneous statement that 'its summer home is along Great Bear Lake and northward'.

Nero has now set us all straight. Although he had never seen a Great Gray Owl before he moved to Winnipeg in 1966, he and his companion Herb Copland have found the Great Gray Owl to be the commonest owl in parts of the mixed forests close to farming areas east of Winnipeg. Indeed, in the winter of 1978-79 the two of them captured and banded 110 Great Gray Owls. No one else had dreamed that the Great Gray occurred in such numbers so far south.

As a species that feeds almost exclusively on mice, the range of the Great Gray Owl must include some open meadow — and what better habitat for mice than the wide grassy slopes of the highways through the forests 50 miles east of Winnipeg. Although tame and confiding, the usually silent, almost immobile and hence inconspicuous Great Gray has remained invisible to most motorists speeding by. Nero and Copland learned to spot the tell-tale 'plunge holes' caused by the owl when pouncing on an unseen mouse it heard beneath the deep snow. They would then look carefully for the almost invisible perched 'shadow', somewhere within a mile of the plunge hole. And in spring, they would look for the nest in the nearest tamarack swamp, perhaps a mile from the winter perch along the highway.

The best story of all is how Nero and Copland learned to capture these owls unharmed for application of an aluminum band to one leg, and to spray the tips of their tails with paint. This has confirmed that most adults present in winter remain in the same general area in summer, while one young bird wandered 468 miles south to the south-eastern corner of Minnesota.

Although Nero is employed during the week as a research scientist with the Manitoba Department of Natural Resources, and his assistant Herb Copland is an employee of the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature, only an obsessive love of their subject could have driven this pair out in all sorts of weather, for the whole weekend, every weekend, with few exceptions, to study at their own time and expense a little-known species.

The Smithsonian Institution Press deserves accolades for their unstinting efforts to produce this fine book. Taylor's photographs alone justify the price and make it a welcome addition to almost anyone's personal library. It will be read and re-read for pleasure and for information, but in addition this beautiful book about a beautiful owl cannot help sensitizing each reader to ecologic relationships and the conservation ethic.

Dr Stuart Houston, professor of diagnostic radiology at the University of Saskatchewan, is author of 'Birds of the Saskatchewan River' and 'To the Arctic by Canoe'.

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FUR TRADE LETTERS OF FRANCIS ERMATINGER
Written to his brother Edward during his service with the Hudson's Bay Company 1818-1853

By Lois Halliday McDonald. The Arthur H. Clark Company, Glendale, California, 1980. 317 pp., illus., maps. $29.00.

Reviewed by John A. Hussey

Francis Ermatinger and his year-older brother Edward entered the service of the Hudson's Bay Company as apprentice clerks in 1818. After learning the rudiments of the fur trade at posts on Hudson Bay and at other eastern establishments the brothers were dispatched across the continent to the Columbia District in 1825. Edward was assigned to the headquarters post of Fort Vancouver, where his skill as an accountant seemed to assure his rise in the Company, but he retired in 1828 to seek a life offering more of the amenities of civilization. He settled down in St Thomas, in present-day Ontario, where he became a merchant, banker, and politician.

Francis's strengths lay in field operations — bartering with the Indians and leading trading and trapping parties. Thus he was generally stationed on the frontier: at Thompson River and the posts of

the upper Columbia River Basin with the Flathead Indians, or in the Snake Country. Although he professed to be dissatisfied with the hardships and dangers of his life and although he complained of his lack of advancement, he remained with the Company until 1853, when he retired to join his brother in St Thomas.

During the years of separation Francis wrote to Edward when his strenuous duties and the infrequent opportunities for communication permitted. The originals of his letters seem to have disappeared, but transcripts of fifty-one covering the period 1823-1853 were made by Cornelius J. Brosnan in 1920 and are preserved in the Huntington Library and at the University of Idaho. Mrs McDonald has copied forty of these letters, with the omission of only a little 'repetitious' material and with a few 'corrections'. They form the backbone of the present book. Letters dated after 1847, when Francis served in the Athabasca District and at Fort William, are of less historical value and are quoted only sufficiently to sketch his career to the time of his retirement. Since Frank, as he was known to his friends, often failed to give his brother many details of his fur-trading activities, Mrs McDonald has introduced and connected the letters by an ample and well-researched narrative which fills the gaps and places Ermatinger's activities in perspective.

Unfortunately, Mrs McDonald's text and her abundant and helpful notes contain a modest number of errors. Some of these are very minor and are of the type which place even the most conscientious of authors at the mercy of unknowing editors and careless proof readers. Examples are the repeated use of 'Northwest Company' for 'North West Company', the date 1815 instead of 1816 for the Battle of Seven Oaks, and the date 1834 instead of 1839 for the formation of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company. But there are other mistakes which should alert the reader to use this book with a certain amount of caution. Mrs McDonald sometimes jumps to conclusions which a more experienced fur-trade historian would have avoided. A few examples will illustrate this point. The company in which Governor Simpson was promoting the sale of stock in 1829 was not intended to produce wool on the Willamette as Mrs McDonald assumes but on Red River (p. 124). Mrs McDonald's statement that if Eva Emery Dye wrote the book *McDonald of Oregon* 'no copy has been found' would distress any surviving members of A. C. McClurg & Co. which published this work in 1906 (p. 97). Far from being an 'undecipherable' code word, the term 'Clooch-I-man' was merely a variation of the Chinook Jargon word for woman (p. 227). Chinook hats were not made of leather but of various plant fibers (p. 87).

Such minor faults do not lessen the importance of this book. The letters are the key element, and they have been adequately reproduced even though Brosnan was not able to read a few words. Although Ermatinger never advanced beyond the rank of Chief Trader, he was not an insignificant figure in the operations of the Columbia Department. In both the Flathead and Snake countries he played a major role in continuing the Company's hard-won dominance when emphasis was shifted from trapping to trading with both natives and American rivals. Because of his many kindnesses to missionaries and other travellers and because of his shrewd trading practices, the jovial Frank was frequently mentioned in western narratives of the period. While he could throw little light on major policies and while he was often frustratingly brief in describing his field activities, his letters occasionally provide valuable new information on his operations and give illuminating insights into the characters of such better-known figures as Sir George Simpson, Dr John McLoughlin, John Work, and Archibald McDonald. But above all, these letters reveal much about how the Company managed its personnel and about the personal business and domestic lives of its 'gentlemen'.

Francis's entanglements with women, both 'in the fashion of the country' and through regular marriage, gave rise to family complications that were both typical of his time and place and yet occasionally astonished and titillated his peers. Several historians have previously made use of these letters but only to a minor extent. By presenting these valuable sources to a wider audience Mrs McDonald has made a major contribution to fur-trade history.

Dr Hussey, now retired, was historian for the Western Region, National Parks Service, U. S. Department of the Interior.

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URBAN INDIANS
The Strangers in Canada's Cities

By Larry Krotz. Photographs by John Paskievich. Hurtig Publishers Ltd., Edmonton, 1980. 157 pp., illus. $9.95.

Reviewed by Abraham Arnold

Anyone who begins to read Larry Krotz's book, *Urban Indians*, with at least a partially open mind, should hopefully come away with a better appreciation of Canada's aboriginal people. This is clearly a 'now' book dealing with the problems of native people trying to live in today's urban society. As Krotz points out, however, Indian troubles may be traced to the fact that the native is the two-century-old 'mythic skeleton' whose consignment to the closet began when the earliest white settlers made serious inroads into North America.

The content of this book moves back and forth from the troubled and often tragic personal experiences of Indian men and women to the institutionalized approaches to the 'Indian problem' which are, more often than not, cold, impersonal and bureaucratic. It is a story of too many failed hopes at the personal level and at the community level and Canadian society as a whole must take the blame.

Larry Krotz writes with considerable understanding of the experiences of Indians trying to 'make it' in three cities: Edmonton, Regina and Winnipeg. The difficulties they encounter should be seen largely as a result of the policy of placing Indians on reserves with the objective of keeping them hidden from society as a whole. The idea that Canada's native people are better kept 'out of sight and out of mind' persists to this day. This is demonstrated in Krotz's account of Regina which in 1976 had an estimated 20,600 natives among its total population of some 149,000. Yet the following year, 110 years after Confederation, the Regina Real Estate Association, seeking to attract people to the city, issued a population break-down by ethnic group — British, Germans, Ukrainians, French — which added up to 100 per cent but failed to include any figure for native Indians.

For those who are prepared to face the reality of Indians in our cities this book is revealing and enlightening. It deals with the difficulties of Indian children in our schools; these are compounded by the troubles their parents have trying to find living accommodations. A major staff responsibility at the Indian and Metis Friendship Centre in Winnipeg is that of the housing counsellors who devote all their time to assisting people looking for places to live.

The employment problem is also dealt with — 'they just don't want Indians' one native employment counsellor stated. If one out of every four or five people in Regina is Indian, Krotz asks, why isn't every fourth or fifth bus driver, or bank teller, or grocery clerk a native person? The same question can be asked of Winnipeg where there are native people in the ratio of one in ten.

There are a couple of references to the inability of the Human Rights Commissions to help native Indians who are discriminated against in employment, and in housing as well. As one reads this book one realizes that the failure of human rights commissions is but one more example of the inability of our established institutions to give native people the kind of assistance to which they should have the same right as all other Canadians.

In spite of this the Indian Affairs Department of the federal government which is responsible for status Indians on the reserves will not recognize the need to extend help to natives leaving the reserves for the cities (and they are really being compelled to leave). It is this shirking of responsibility and government 'buckpassing' which leads to sit-in confrontations at Indian Affairs offices.

Where there is special funding for native urban projects it is sometimes cut off in mid-stream — as witness the unfinished demographic study of Edmonton's native population, and the death of 'Neeginan' in Winnipeg — 'the village that never was'.

Such failed efforts contribute to keeping Indians in the city on 'skid-row', to their committal to prison in too large numbers, and to the fact that the average Indian in Manitoba consumes medical and hospital services at two and a half times the provincial average.

Krotz makes a significant comparison between the attitude of the average white person towards native Indians and towards immigrants from other countries. Immigrants are seen as necessary to our cities if only because they take jobs that no one else wants. Too many whites do not see even this role for natives.

The book points out that 50 per cent of natives settling in the cities make the adjustment with little difficulty. The other 50 per cent ought to be given at least equal consideration with immigrant refugees such as the Vietnamese 'boat people'. To do this many aspects of the stereotyping of Indians have yet to be overcome.

John Paskievich's photographs in this book complement Larry Krotz's story by illustrating the fact of Indian poverty in Canada. It is really the poverty of Canadian society as a whole.

Abraham Arnold is the director of the Manitoba Association for Rights and Liberties.

The Fourth North American Fur Trade Conference

A four-day conference on the North American fur trade will be held on October 1-4, 1981, at Grand Portage, Minnesota, and at Old Fort William, Thunder Bay, Ontario. The United States-Canadian event will coincide with the 250th anniversary of the landing of French explorer and fur trader Varennes de la Vérendrye at Grand Portage in August, 1731 and his subsequent wintering at Kaministiquia.

The conference program and registration material are now available. If you wish to receive them, please write to:

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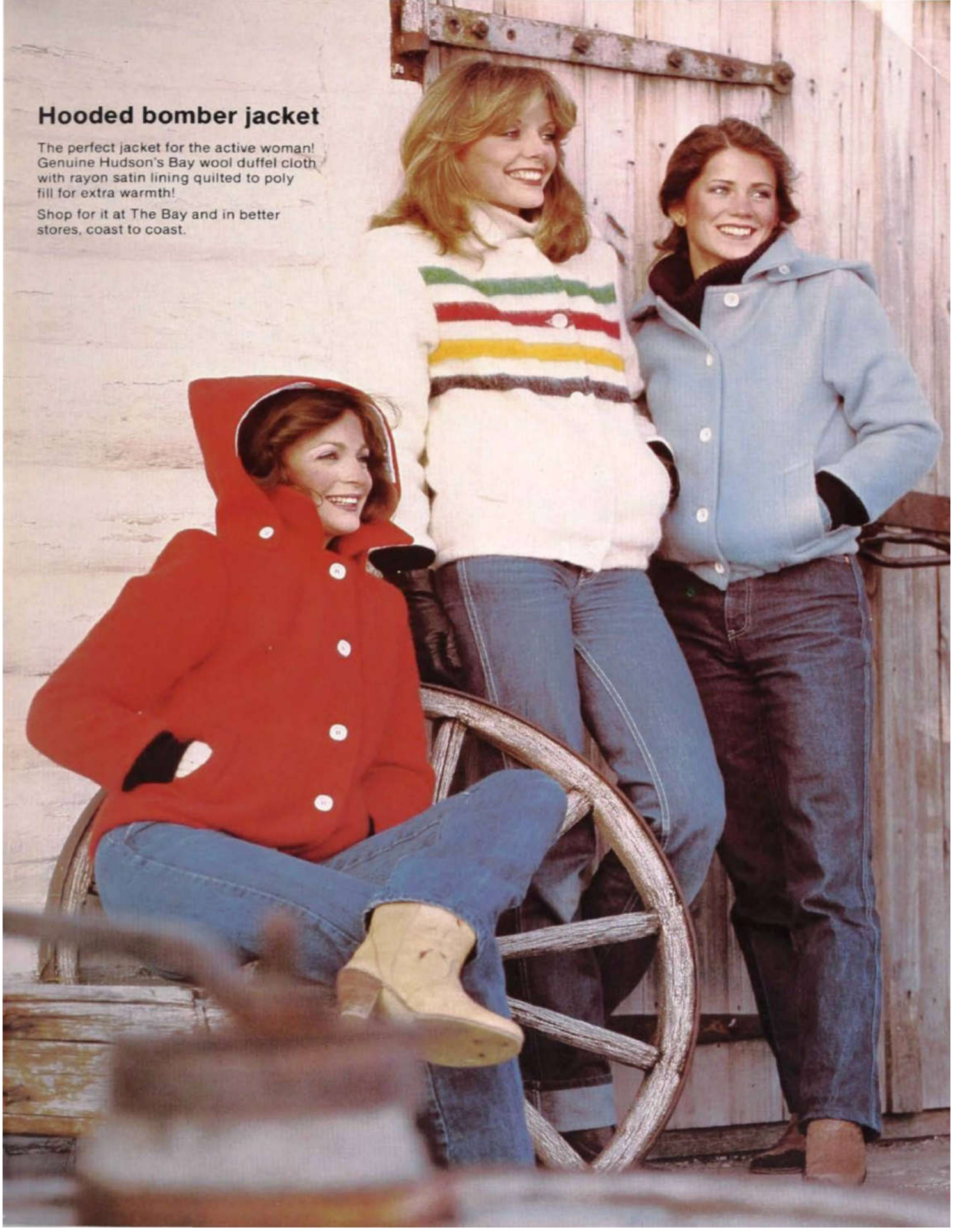
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